END OF AN ERA, BY VAN WYCK BROOKS

The Saturday Review of Literature

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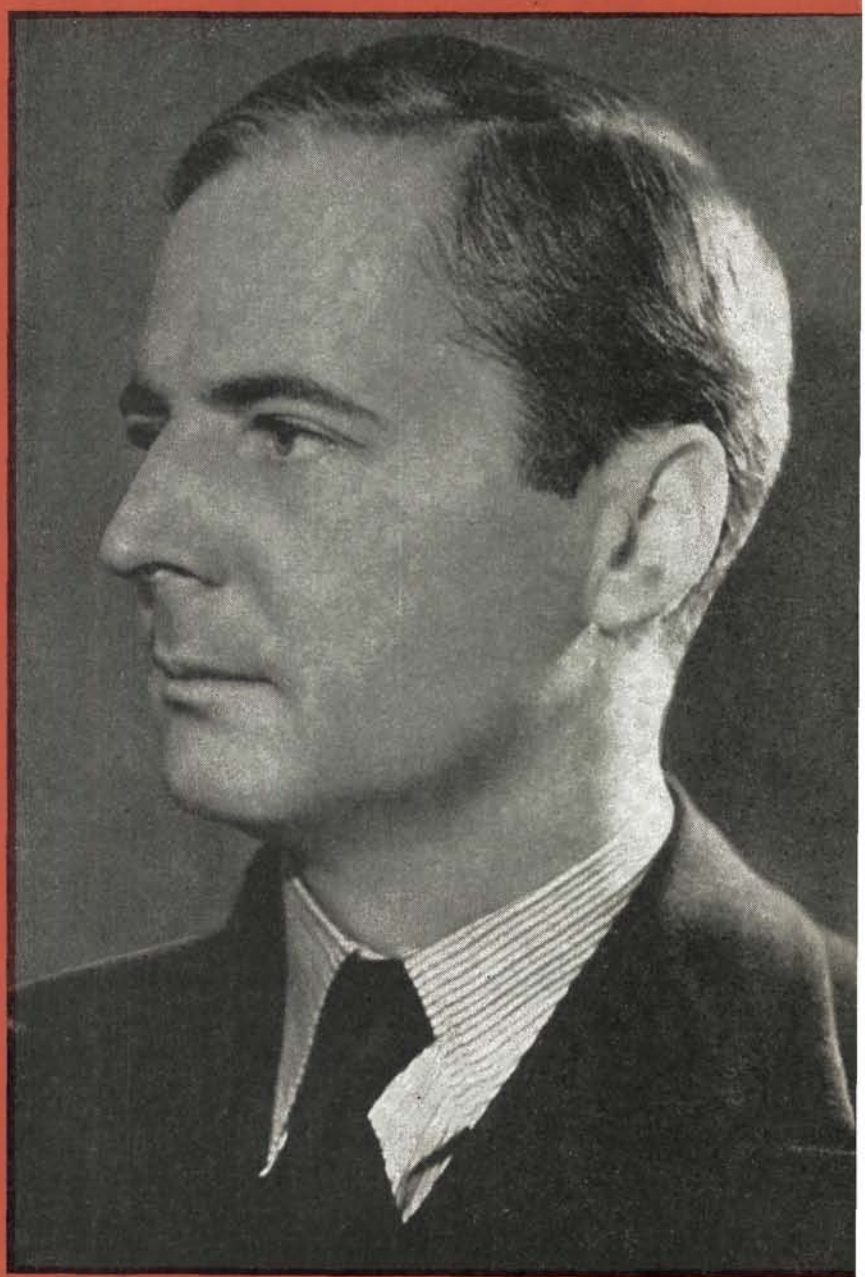

WALTER MILLIS "becomes the dispassionate historian rather than the ardent advocate" . . . *(See page 5)*

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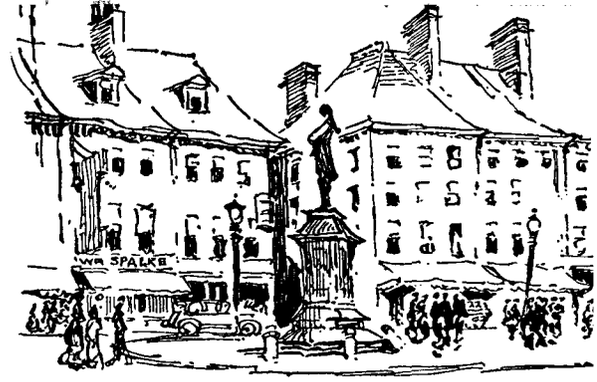

Pen sketches of old Boston by E. H. Suydam from "Boston and the Boston Legend" (Appleton-Century)

END of an ERA

*NEW ENGLAND: INDIAN SUMMER**

VAN WYCK BROOKS

IT was in the early eighteen-nineties that an English authoress, at a Boston dinner-table, said, "Isn't it a pity, don't you think, that all the really interesting Americans are dead?" The remark might have been phrased more happily, but, after all, this lady expressed what many of the Bostonians were thinking. Their classic age was past, or passing.

One by one, the older writers were gathered to their fathers. Emerson, Longfellow, Motley, and Dana were gone. In 1886, Emily Dickinson died at Amherst in the red-brick house where she was born. Fifty-six years old, she had been for a while an invalid and more invisible than ever; but one of her pleasures had been to listen while a younger neighbor played the piano for her in the empty parlor. Miss Dickinson hovered in the hallway, a glimmering whiteness. In her isolation, she had never heard Beethoven, Bach, or Scarlatti; and she always sent in to the player a glass of wine on a silver salver, with a cake, a flower, and a poem, a flash of the moment. At the funeral, Colonel Higginson read "No Coward Soul Is Mine," and Emily Brontë's unknown fellow-poet was carried to the grave by laborers on her father's land.

This youngest of the older writers passed obscurely, while the public fame of the others was in everyone's mouth. She had left word to have her poems burned. She had kept them in envelopes and boxes in her desk and her bureau, rolled like parchment in bundles bound with ribbons. Her sister destroyed her papers; then, struck by the poems, she saved them, in a fever of excitement. She turned them over to Higginson and the friend who had played for Miss Dickinson, and four years later they began to appear in the series of volumes that announced a unique and original American poet. Meanwhile, of the earlier writers a few survived. Harriet Beecher Stowe, who had lost her mind, roamed about her grounds in the care of a muscular Irishwoman, drifting in and out of Mark Twain's house. Now and again, on slippered foot, she stole behind some sleeper and roused him with a sudden Indian war-whoop, or she wandered into Warner's house and sat at the piano, playing some weird refrain or quavery hymn. To those who spoke of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," she often said, "God wrote it." Whittier had retired to Danvers, where he lived at "Oak Knoll" with his spinster cousins. There he had revived his old skill in horticulture and busied himself with flowers, plants, and trees; and there a visitor found him once playing croquet against himself among the many-colored autumn leaves. A vessel built on the Merrimac bore his name, and the governor and his staff went out to Danvers to celebrate his birthday.

IN Boston, the half-blind Francis Parkman pursued his Canadian history in his shadowy study. One met Parkman out of doors, with a walking-stick in either hand, hobbling at a run along the pavement, then throwing himself to breathe, against a wall; for, although he could scarcely support himself, neither could he saunter. In his mind, for all his crippled body, he was still on the Oregon trail. Pale, with his desperate energy and his black-rimmed glasses, moving as if a demon drove him forward, he frightened the children who came upon him suddenly, lying in wait on a doorstep. But Parkman's health and eyesight had improved with age, and he wrote his finest book, "Montcalm and Wolfe," with his own hand, in pencil. Howells was only one of an army of readers for whom Parkman had made Quebec and Montreal "the beautiful inheritance of all dreamers." The birthdays of most of these aging worthies were commemorated throughout the country, and their visages were almost as familiar as those of the national heroes on coins and stamps. In the game of "Authors," the heads of historians and poets eternally rested from their labors, brow on hand. Dr. Holmes felt like Nestor recollecting his ancient comrades, Theseus, Polyphemus, and the rest; for the Saturday "club" was only a walking-stick now. As a wholesale talker, the doctor kept his end up, and he still presented his keyboard of nerve-pulps, not yet tanned or ossified, to the finger-touch of everything outside him. But the days of the conversational dogmatist, on the imperial scale, were gone forever. Johnsons and Popes were impossible in an age of science. For the rest, the veteran harper of Boston often attuned his strings now to birthdays that foretold a vacant future.

The "second growth" of New England authors scarcely rivalled the first, and that "interesting" Americans might still be living elsewhere was no great consolation to the men of Boston. Besides, could they be really interesting if they were not Bostonians? In other fields than literature, in science and philosophy, New England was certainly advancing. William James had long been at work on the "Principles of Psychology," which was to appear in 1890, and Josiah Royce had been called from Berkeley to Harvard. In California he had been the "solitary philosopher between Behring's Strait and Tierra del Fuego." Royce, whose head suggested the world poised on the body of the tortoise, was one of those "extraordinary men, too eminent for praise," as his colleague, George Herbert Palmer, called him, who were forming the great philosophical department in Cambridge. These men were new centres of agitation in the intellectual life of Boston, and as long as Holmes and Lowell survived, with Parkman and two or three others, its literary prestige was secure. Writers from afar still came to Boston with veneration and curiosity. A case in point at the moment was Hamlin Garland. When he took the "back trail" from Dakota, reversing the pioneer law of development, even as Royce had reversed it, Boston at-

**This is the second of a series of several articles from the forthcoming book, "New England: Indian Summer," by Van Wyck Brooks, to be published by E. P. Dutton.*

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tracted Garland, not New York. He had come with a feeling like Howells's, twenty-five years before, and was living there on forty cents a day, reading John Fiske at the Public Library, along with Spencer, Taine, and Whitman, while his tan melted away with his corn-fed muscle. He lived in Boston several years, studying, lecturing, teaching, and he wrote "Main-Travelled Roads" at Jamaica Plain, where Parkman continued his history in the summer season. He haunted the streets with as firm a conviction that he was at the centre of the world as Henry James felt in the streets of London. But, for all this, the American centre had shifted to New York,—or was rapidly shifting, at least,—and Boston knew it. The literary leaders of the younger generation, Howells and the "Boston-plated" Aldrich, were half outsiders. They were loyal to the Boston genius, but not to Boston without the genius, which sometimes put outsiders in their places; and Howells had grown restive, although literary Boston had heaped him with all its honors and crowned him with laurels. The town that he adored was dying, the other Boston was none of his, and the young men were growing up dispirited and listless there. A Harvard student, John Jay Chapman, lay awake at night, "wondering what was the matter"—as he put it—"with Boston." Another acute observer explained it later. That Boston had "filled up" was H. G. Wells's diagnosis. Its capacity was just sufficient to comprehend the whole achievement, up to a certain year, of the human mind. About 1875, it had reached an equilibrium. Its finality was a proof of the laws of physics.

THIS was partly true, at least, sufficiently so for Howells, who felt a need for pastures new. Boston had been kind to him, and he held a unique position there as the confidant of writers old and young. When Longfellow died, it was Howells who was asked to look over his posthumous poems and make a last selection for publication. When Whittier cast about for someone to write his official biography, Howells was the first to whom he turned. Later, Norton asked him to write the official life of Lowell, who had offered him the Smith professorship. Cambridge could no further go than to add the name of Howells to those of Ticknor, Longfellow, and Lowell, or, rather, to suggest this honor, which Howells refused; and, when the Boston writers and artists wished to establish the Tavern Club, he was invited to form it and lead the meetings. Just under fifty, he had vindicated Holmes's joke,—the apostolic succession was in his hands; but he had lost his feeling for New England, as New England was losing itself in the rest of the country. *The North American Review* had moved to New York; so had Edwin Booth, Parkman's neighbor, who had lived so long in the town. Boston had ceased to represent the widest American interests, and the younger American writers were ceasing to come there: they were drawn to New York much more in their dreams of careers, and they carried the widest American interests with them. The Boston writers were local writers, more and more, as the years went on, as the law of metropolitan attraction gradually lost its force there. The centre of poets and thinkers had become the centre of tutors and scholars and followed the path of a greater and earlier Athens. Dr. Holmes was touchy on the subject, and the question mildly raged in the Boston press. It was observed that, whenever a Boston author died, New York at once became the American London. The Bostonians, as Aldrich said, were not thin-skinned about it. They had no skin at all.

HOWELLS had moved from Cambridge to Belmont, and at last into Boston itself. There he had bought a house on "the water side of Beacon Street." In this house he had written "The Rise of Silas Lapham," and the story of the house that Lapham built was drawn from his own experience here and at Belmont. For Howells cared deeply for architecture. He had an instinctive feeling for all the plastic arts, and he invariably saw with the eye of a painter. But he had had his "twenty years of Boston," and the basis of his New England life was broken. He was disturbed and unsettled. He had gone abroad for a year and seen his country once more in perspective. Boston, from the point of view of Florence,—of the English and Americans there,—was much the same as Denver, Chicago, St. Louis; and this was the feeling, rapidly growing again in Howells, that every excursion from Boston served to confirm. He went for a winter to Buffalo; he thought for a time that he might live perhaps in Washington. Meanwhile, he arranged with the Harpers to publish his books and was writing in *The Century* and *Scribner's*, the New York rivals of *The Atlantic*. He withdrew from New England reluctantly and slowly. He sometimes returned to Boston for a year or a season, and many of his later summers were passed in Maine. But henceforth New York was his centre. The world was still full of novelty and interest for him, and he liked the huge, kind, noisy, sprawling city. As an all-American mind, sensitive to national changes, he wished to be in touch with the

(*Continued on page* 16)

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Road to War, Part II

WHY EUROPE FIGHTS. By Walter Millis. New York: William Morrow & Co. 1940. 277 *pp., with index.* $2.50.

Reviewed by ALLEN W. DULLES

TWENTY years of world history are telescoped into slightly more than two hundred pages in Walter Millis's "Why Europe Fights." Starting with the summer of 1919 and the peace of Versailles, Millis carries his story to September 3, 1939 and the outbreak of the second World War.

As Millis says in the introduction, he is attempting to do nothing more than to give a presentation of the outstanding landmarks of European history during these twenty years. In character this book differs drastically from that brilliant, but to me somewhat specious, piece of special pleading, "The Road to War," which he wrote some five years ago. Today he becomes the dispassionate historian rather than the ardent advocate. He is giving us facts and not arguing a thesis. But there is still plenty of drama crowded into the book and there is brilliant descriptive writing in many of its pages.

In these days when events are moving with such staggering rapidity—and this review is written as the French armies give notice of capitulation—it is only fair to the author to note that his book went to press before the invasion of Holland and Belgium and before the war which some cynics had called a "phoney," became a wave of destruction such as our civilization has never seen. If the book had been printed a few weeks later, the title might well have been taken from the heading he gives to Part II of the book—"The Collapse of Europe."

Between the lines of these pages the discerning reader can find the answer to the question why Germany is militarily so powerful and her antagonists, on land and in the air, so weak in comparison. Germany is dynamic, ruthless, aggressive, and always moving towards an objective. The Allies have been on the defensive, trying to do a work of salvage. The greatest fallacy preached in the past decade is found in the too generally accepted slogan that "the defense is more powerful than the attack." Unfortunately, it is proving to be true that the driving initiative of the planned attack is what makes a nation strong.

Despite the dramatic events of the past few weeks, Millis's book is in no sense out of date for he is dealing with years of history which unfortunately cannot now be changed. Future historians may differ as to who bears the chief blame for the blindness, inefficiency, and lack of preparation of the democracies; they may differ as to when and how the tide might have been turned.

In compressing the history of twenty years into a few pages, Millis naturally can deal only with the series of crises which punctured these years. The events which shattered the Versailles peace are portrayed in quick succession. The Manchurian crisis, Hitler's seizure of Germany, Germany's withdrawal from the League and rearmament, the reoccupation of the Rhineland, Ethiopia, the Spanish civil war, and then as the tempo and gravity of events is accelerated, the seizure of Austria, the Sudetenland, Bohemia, Poland and war.

In the reading we tend to forget that between these crises many months and sometimes years elapsed and that during these periods the democracies relaxed, hoping that each crisis was the last; they failed to see the trend and were lured into a false security. The pattern was laid before the world but only a few discerned it.

The first one hundred and fifty pages tells of the slow whittling away of the post war system of Versailles and then we come to the German reoccupation of the Rhineland which Millis deems, and rightly I think, the turning point. As we look back upon it, this was possibly the last moment when the democracies could successfully have resisted.

A few pages later there is the dramatic appeal of the Emperor of Ethiopia, Haile Selassie. Ethiopia was, after all, unimportant in a material way—at least, compared with the issues at stake today—but morally it had vital significance and the last appeal of the Ethiopian Emperor strikes us today with tragic force: "I must still hold on until my tardy Allies appear. If they never come, then I say prophetically and without bitterness: 'The West will perish.'" And Millis concludes this episode by saying: "In the flames which greeted the Italian troops as they rolled down from the Ethiopian hills into Addis Ababa much more had perished than the ramshackle houses of a barbarian capital."

The story is graphically told of these twenty years; during the first ten years or so of the period the Allies could never bring themselves to try to make a real peace, and during the last ten they never could persuade themselves to resist with force any specific act of aggression. It is a story of half-way measures, tardily adopted, which uniformly failed, and with each failure the aggressors became bolder; a story of diplomatic protests, vigorous in language but empty of content; of forever yielding until it was too late successfully to resist.

The moral is, I suppose, that nothing is more subtly dangerous than victory, nothing more likely to make a nation strong than defeat if allowed uninterruptedly within its borders to strengthen itself for revenge.

With the fast pressing events of these days, we here in the United States should take the time to read this book as these tragic experiences have many a lesson for us in our own critical situation in this hemisphere.

Drawing by Forain from "Art and the Great" (E. P. Dutton)

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The Art of Hagiography

THE STAR OF SATAN. By Georges Bernanos. Translated by Pamela Morris. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1940. 348 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by BEN RAY REDMAN

MOST of us today, I imagine, look upon hagiography as a lost art and think of its subjects as figures belonging to a more or less distant past. But not so Georges Bernanos, ardent French Royalist and passionate Catholic. Saintship is as close and real to him as citizenship; the battle in which saints engage is no less actual, and even more terrible, than those of Flanders and France. "Satan," to him, is not a poetic synonym of evil in general—vaguely apprehended and indifferently felt—but the name of the veritable Prince of Darkness, that fallen archangel, ever avid of souls, who assumes all guises in his ceaseless efforts to snatch victims down to Hell. And in the book that is now translated Bernanos is a hagiographer who employs the baits and lures of a novelist; for "The Star of Satan" is the life story of Father Donissan who became the saint of Lumbres. The biography is fiction, but through this fiction the author has sought to express what he believes to be eternal, and awful, truth.

The story is divided into three parts, and in the first part the saint himself does not appear. It is Germaine Malorthy—more affectionately known as Mouchette—who holds the center of the stage. At the outset she seems to be merely a neurotic, wilful, small-town girl of sixteen whose *Bovarysme* has led her into an affair that is bearing illegitimate fruit. But after we have watched her reactions to her pregnancy, seen her kill her first lover and fasten her claws upon a helpless second, we begin to realize that her springs of viciousness are uncommon; and soon we understand that we are being asked to believe that she is literally possessed by the Devil.

Drawing by Marcel Maurel

Saintship is close to Bernanos.

Those who have read Bernanos's "A Diary of My Times" are familiar with the strength of the author's faith and the polemical vigor of his prose. They are familiar with the flowers of rhetoric that bloom more naturally in French than in English. They know that his compassion is brothered by an unsparing contempt for all that he deems blind and cowardly; a contempt that spends itself most lethally upon those priests of his Church who would meet the world half-way. In "The Star of Satan" we encounter a religious novelist whose dramatic intensity matches, or exceeds, the secular intensity of a Webster.

But however great its qualities may be, it is obvious that this book is not for everyone. Indeed, it may be safely recommended to only two classes of readers: those whose faith obviates the need of an imaginative effort; and those whose powers of imaginative sympathy are sufficient to enable them to feel and understand—at least partially—even in the absence of belief.

Communal Revolt

JOY OF MAN'S DESIRING. By Jean Giono. Translated by Katherine Allen Clarke. New York: The Viking Press. 1940. 458 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by ISABELLA W. ATHEY

OF the inhabitants of Grémone Plateau in the *Basses Alpes,* the most sensitive and most conscious, Jourdan, looked at his companions one day and realized that they were all suffering from something worse than care, or fear. He thought of this common disease as leprosy, with the secret anticipation that sometime a healer would appear. This is fulfilled when a stranger comes upon Jourdan ploughing during an autumn night under the stars. From this point, the story has two main currents: the efforts of Bobi, the strange healer, to teach the Grémonois to become natural and capable of joy, and the reactions of the people, to each other and to Bobi, during his stay. Many readers may feel that they, too, are lepers, having little faith in or understanding of this cure through joy, partly because the word joy is embarrassing and meaningless nowadays, partly because the technique here occasionally suggests grown people's high-minded, sentimental schemes for entertaining children.

Giono's code is a refusal to compromise.

When Bobi insists upon the importance of the useless (the narcissi) he is not being a Peter Pan. Bobi is, as far as the outsider can judge, spokesman for the author, and Giono is too genuine and too serious to be whimsical. Nor is he merely an individualist, for his strong sense of man's communal function is clear here as in "Harvest," so the planting of narcissi and hawthorn hedges is not an irresponsible diversion but an expression of his revolt against the effects of industrial materialism, more poetical and radical than any garden-city retreat from urban life. His territory is whole forests, whole plateaux, and this intensity perhaps explains why he is frequently described as a pagan.

The term seems inexact as well as inadequate, for the only pagan world with which the average reader is familiar is that of Greek and Roman cultures, and the classical values, clear even at second and third hand of organic restraint, of rationalistic emphasis on cause and effect, have no bearing upon Giono's code which is, at bottom, a refusal to compromise.

This quality constitutes his originality, both as a man of beliefs and as a novelist. It leads also to some of his weaknesses, carelessness in characterization, for instance, and disregard for motivation beyond his personal intuition. For example, in "Joy of Man's Desiring" no one is entirely alive and convincing except Jourdan, in spite of a wealth of acute observation and imaginative hints about human behavior. It is as if the author were impatient of the laborious individuality of people, at the same time developing with loving and economical care the personality of tree and flower, fox and lizard.

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The Surviving Empire

THE BRITISH EMPIRE. By Stephen Leacock. New York: Dodd, Mead, & Company. 1940. 263 *pp., with an index.* $2.

GREAT BRITAIN: An Empire in Transition. By Albert Viton. New York: The John Day Company. 1940. 352 *pp., with an index.* $3.

Reviewed by CRANE BRINTON

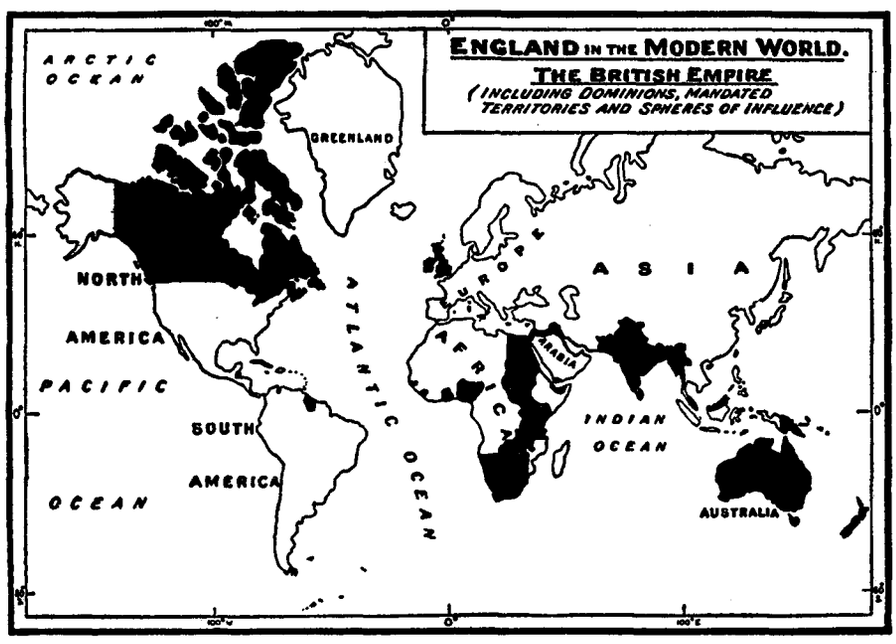
THE stock of the British Empire, in American public opinion, has been of recent months most irregular. After Norway and the first days of the German invasion of the Low Countries it reached a new low: people began to talk of it as ready for liquidation. Since Dunkirk, it has come back somewhat. These two books are therefore most apt, for they remind the intelligent reader that the British Empire is an extraordinarily complex institution, that it has weathered all kinds of military disasters, and that its fate is not likely to hinge on any single campaign—not even a German *Blitzkrieg*. It has taken years to build the British Empire. Perhaps that Empire is in decline, but the decline will also take years. Your newspaper will no more be able to tell you when the British Empire falls than Gibbon himself can tell you when the Roman Empire fell.

These books will, however, help you to judge the present state of the British Empire. Both Mr. Leacock and Mr. Viton agree in their conclusion, that the Empire will survive the present crisis. The conclusion, however, is about all the two books have in common—and Mr. Leacock's conclusion is rather implied than explicit.

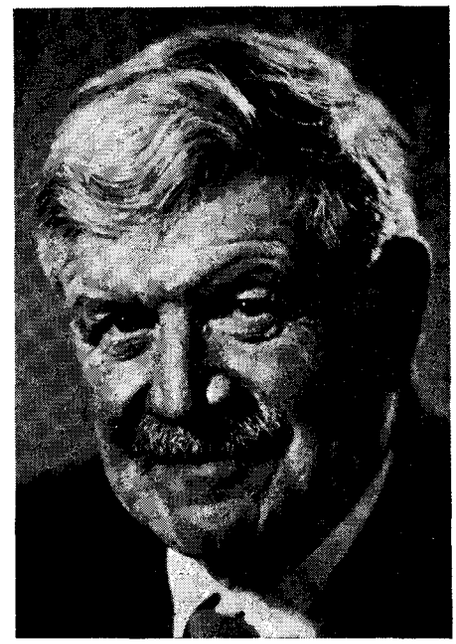
Mr. Leacock writes informally and easily, letting his humorist self pierce pleasantly through his economist and political scientist self. His history, statistics, and geography are all pleasantly seasoned and agreeably served. He is aware of the problems confronting the Empire, and modest and tentative in offering his solutions. His tone may be a bit offensive to American readers not already predisposed to love the English. It is the tone of a sweetly reasonable Kipling: the "Recessional," adapted to the manner of the after-dinner speech.

Mr. Viton's book is a much more substantial piece of work, a critical analysis of the workings of an institution he diagrams in concentric rings: the inner ring, Great Britain itself; then the Colonial Empire proper, mostly in the tropics, mostly directly administered from London; the Indian Empire, administered in a dozen different ways, but still substantially controlled from above by a British minority; the Dominion Empire, completely self-governing: the outer Empire, states like Tibet, Egypt, the Portuguese colonies, over which Britain has very real control, if not actual sovereignty; finally, the Financial Empire, including most of Scandinavia and South America, over which in normal times Great Britain's money power assures a very real political influence.

This huge agglomeration Mr. Viton has studied carefully from contemporary sources. His description sounds pessimistic, but that is merely because he measures British achievement by a very high, human, other-worldly standard. There is poverty, over-crowding, disease, and all the other social evils in Trinidad and Nigeria. "Indirect rule" by black chieftains is avoidance of responsibility by the British. India is seething with rebellion, and understandably, since Indian poverty is incredible, and the British have done little to solve social problems. White Australia is defenseless against the Japanese. And so on, in the tone rather oddly known in America as "liberal." Yet Mr. Viton thinks the French, Italians, and Germans are much worse rulers of alien peoples: and in spite of his criticisms, he entitles his last chapter "The Empire Will Not Die."



Great Britain is more than an island; it is a body of nations which will have to be conquered before the Empire is beaten.



Stephen Leacock writes informally and easily.

Crane Brinton, of the department of History at Harvard University, is the author of "The Anatomy of Revolution."

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WHAT CAN BE SAID TO THE YOUNG?

NO book, or library, will give to the Commencement speaker this year infallible advice for the young. If he tells the gathered graduating class of a high school just what they should do to save their country, he will be only exercising the ancient oratorical privilege of omniscience. What has happened to the world is clear enough. Its social controls—religion, philosophy, morality, the practice of the humanities and the arts have lagged behind our technological advances. We are children given guns, with which, untaught, we shoot our brothers. Why and how this has happened many are eager to explain; and though their theories differ, more than one may be correct. But what to do about a world situation which will not wait for preaching—that, except for the immediacies of self-defense, is in the mists.

But this much—and it is not little—may be said to young people of the oncoming generation who—if they are Americans—have probably some years ahead in which it will be their job to learn how to live, and if possible lead, in a twentieth century where the best trained experts, the most well meaning men, the finest technologists will be the slaves of a despotism if they do not learn how to keep government the servant, not the master, of the people. The knowledge, if not the wisdom, which can produce a better world-order, or certainly a better and stronger and safer order in a country which, like the United States, controls a continent, is already available. It is part of that higher education in economics, statecraft, psychology, sociology, yes, and literature and philosophy, in which the older generation has failed to find the necessary vitamins. The right answers to the right questions are undoubtedly implicit in the studies of human relations of the last twenty years, which have progressed incredibly; just as an increased control of nature was implicit in the brilliant discoveries in science of the nineteenth century. The young student with, say, four years of college ahead of him, does not himself have to invent new materials of education. Unused possibilities of both new and old knowledge are in every university curriculum. It is not so much what to do in the distribution of wealth, in the balancing of production and consumption, in the restriction of war, that is in real doubt. It is how to do it. Clearly the right questions have not been asked, since the answers even when intelligent, have been often futile.

Often, but not always! The remarkable fact about the disastrous tens, twenties, thirties, and forties of this century, is that never in the history of the world has progress, real progress, in many fields been so rapid. If there is to be a millenium, then in health, sustenance, transportation, communication of minds, shelter, distribution of goods, we have been more rapidly constructive in its pursuit than any era of ten times the length of ours. If the fifth century Roman seeing a Europe of exhausted soil, with a slave system breaking down, and the means of civilized life becoming yearly more difficult to obtain, had every reason to be a pessimist, the same cannot be said for an American of 1940. He knows what *may* happen in a world breaking down into violence and despotism because its civilization could not keep up with the effects of the industrial revolution. But he also knows what *can* happen, and, specifically, what can be done in an America forced to reorganize a nineteenth century economic system to fit the facts, and to revitalize a traditional democracy by the use of gains in knowledge made under its freedoms, though escaped from its inadequate controls.

We can tell all this to the young, but we cannot, unfortunately tell them what questions they must ask in order to get the answers they will so bitterly need. It is their job to find out before their time of action comes. That will be the education of the best young people going from schools to college or universities this year. No matter how the headlines flare, it is probable that, for the next few years anyhow in the United States, the boys and girls of sixteen to twenty will seek what we sought in higher education—social contacts, a good time, knowledge, and professional efficiency. But they will have to do more if the next American generation is going to do better with the controls of technology and of human nature than we did. We invented the tractor and got the tank. We invented the airplane, and may lose our cities. We invented the radio, and have mass propaganda. Somebody has to ask why, and get answers that can be put to work. The young must ask them, for it is the young who must do the work when their time comes. That is their job for the next few years. That is what our generation can honestly, and not unhopefully, tell them.

H. S. C.

That We Survive

Melville Cane

IN this black hour,
When skies are dark with hate,
And sweet green earth lies prostrate, charred and sere;
When the crazed savage smashes at the gate,
Ravishing all we hold most dear;
In this so cruel and portentous hour,
In spite of every outward sign
Of ruin and of holocaust,
All's not lost.
Believe!
Believe!
That fire itself is helpless to devour
Or undermine
The treasure of the spirit.
Believe!
Be brave—
That we survive
Though all that world we loved be left a grave!

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"British Speech Invaded"

SIR:—Is the expression *white-haired boy* an Americanism? So H. L. Mencken implies in the article "British Speech Invaded" [*SRL,* June 1] where he calls attention to the use of the expression in the London *Times:* "Prior, Ramsay, Smart and some others are no longer the collectors *white-haired boys* that they were." But Maria Edgeworth, in her novel "Castle Rackrent," published in 1800, has old Thady say of Sir Condy Rackrent: "As for me, he was ever my *white-headed boy;* often's the time . . . he would slip down to me in the kitchen and love to sit on my knee . . ." Miss Edgeworth appends this note: "'White-headed boy'—is used by the Irish as an expression of fondness. We are at a loss for the derivation of this term."

BROTHER C. PHILIP.

Manhattan College,
New York.

SIR:—Mr. Mencken thinks that the London *Times* ("the most English in all England") used an Americanism in the following statement: "Prior, Ramsay, Smart and some others are no longer the collectors' *white-haired boys* that they were."

Webster's New International Dictionary of 1928 gives, among others, the following definition of the adjective *white.* Regarded with especial favor; favorite; darling. *Obsolete.*

"I am his *white* boy, and will not be gulled." *Ford.* It gives the following definition of the noun *whiteboy.* A favorite. *Obsolete* . . . . . .

"One of God's *whiteboys*" *Bunyan.*

Mr. Seumas MacManus, in his "The Rocky Road to Dublin," quotes a poem by Ethna Carbery, entitled "Páistín Fionn," and he translates this as "Fair-haired Boy."

Dinneen's Irish-English Dictionary says that *páistín* means a child and that the adjective *fionn* means white, pale, fair (of hue, hair). And the expression is common in Gaelic literature.

Might not the *Times* have picked up the expression from the Irish? *We* evidently did.

MAY HENDERSON TAYLOR.

Los Angeles, California.

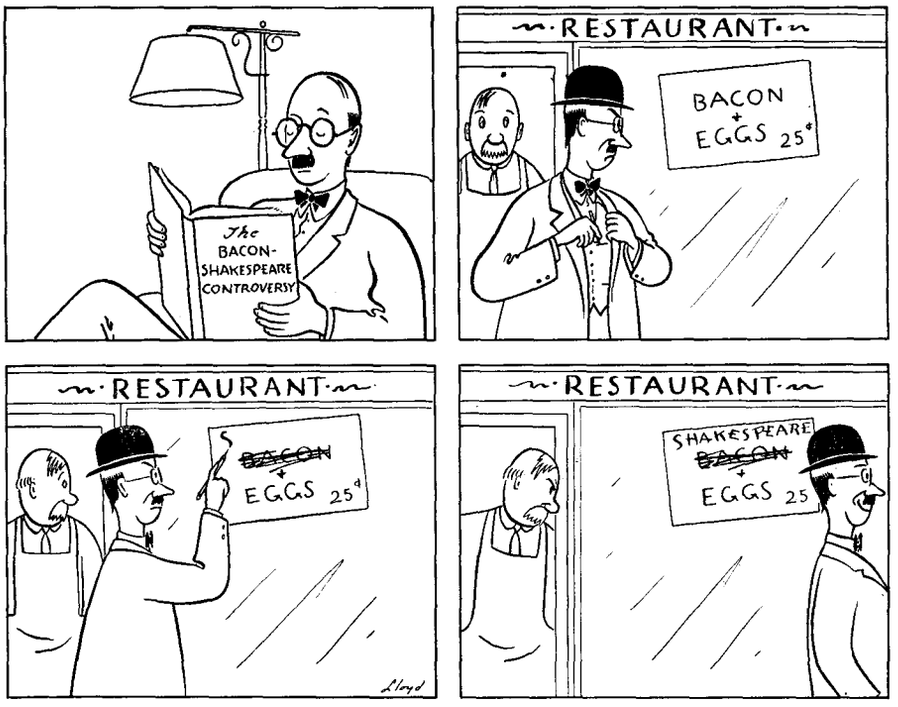
SPPAR

SIR:—Are any of your readers interested in the organization of a Society for the Protection and Preservation of Arabic Numerals?

If not, will those opposed contend that the disposition of NLRB cases is really more clearly expressed by the picture-writing on page 18 of your issue of May 25 than it would be by the appropriate combinations of the old-fashioned digits 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. and 0? Or is the concept 1000 more easily grasped by the modern mind when represented by three little men at a bar?

ALLAN M. PRICE.

New York City.



Not So Unimportant

SIR:—In Mr. Aldington's Imagist memoirs [*SRL,* March 16] I find the following: "By way of insinuating that the Imagists were merely an unimportant clique, Ezra raked together a number of easily forgotten poets in a Catholic Anthology." Among the contributors to the Catholic Anthology which I (and, I am led to believe, a number of other people) have found it easy to remember were Mr. Pound himself, William Carlos Williams, T. S. Eliot, and William Butler Yeats.

PERRY REED.

Palestine, Texas

"St. Nicholas"

SIR:—The article "St. Nicholas," in your issue of May 4th was most interesting. However, there was in said article no mention of a weekly publication by Harpers, known at first as *Harpers' Young People,* but later as *Harpers' Round Table.* The first volume appeared in 1880, but I have not discovered at what time publication ceased.

While it could not maintain the high standard of *St. Nicholas, Harpers' Young People* was a boon to those with limited incomes and could boast of a number of contributors whose reputation is indisputable. Among these were to be found: Frank R. Stockton, Kirk Munroe, Sarah Orne Jewett, James Otis, Mary E. Wilkins, Palmer Cox, Margaret Sangster, Thomas Nelson Page, and Louisa M. Alcott.

Could it be that Mr. Calkins did not know of this magazine?

EILEEN W. FOSTER.

Information, Please

SIR:—I am planning a study of the great mathematician, Joseph Louis Lagrange (1736-1813), and I am anxious to obtain access to as much of Lagrange's manuscript material as is possible. I should be grateful for any information concerning these manuscripts.

GEORGE SARTON.

Harvard Library,
Cambridge, Mass.

SIR:—I am making a study of the life of the prophet Nostradamus (1503-1566). I would appreciate hearing from persons having material either upon his life or upon his book "Prophetic Centuries." Any material sent will be carefully copied and returned safely. Thank you.

E. C. JACOBSEN.

Lock Drawer 7,
Story City, Iowa.

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Dissenting Opinions

GRANVILLE HICKS: Mr. Fletcher Pratt's review of my book, "The First to Awaken," obviously requires some sort of explanation, and, after considerable thought, I have hit upon one.

As I see it, Mr. Pratt came home from the office one day feeling pretty low. It was one of the days when all his expert analyses had been proven wrong. Seeing "The First to Awaken" on his desk, he said, "What the devil does the *Saturday Review* mean by sending me this stuff?" (And a very pertinent question, too.) Mr. Pratt, it seems, has never liked utopian novels—perhaps because they usually abolish wars and therefore, by implication, military experts. But that night, being something of a puritan at heart, he subconsciously decided to punish himself by reading the book. He stuck to it persistently, all the while growing angrier and angrier. By the time he finished, he was fit to be tied, but unfortunately he was all alone in the house.

Sitting down to his typewriter, he spoke sternly to himself. "First," he said, "we'll call the book Communist, which ought to irritate both the author and the Communist Party. Then we'll say that it's hackneyed; that's always safe. Then we'll throw out the historical chapter because the author guessed wrong about Hitler's going into Holland. (Damn these people who guess wrong.) Then we'll make a scientific crack about the rocket airplanes, which disposes of the gadgets."

After he had typed furiously for half an hour, he stopped and scratched his head. (As I see the scene, the head is a little bald, but that isn't really essential to the story.) "Now," he said, still speaking rather crossly to himself, "for the serious stuff." A fine sentence occurred to him about the author's being involved in one difficulty that he didn't see and two that he did. When he tried to go on, however, he could find but one difficulty. "Oh, well," he consoled himself, "it's a good big difficulty. Regimentation, dictatorship of the psychiatrists. That'll fix 'em."

By that time, of course, he was feeling better, and as he read the review over, he began to soften. "I haven't given much idea what the book is about," he reflected. "Certainly I don't suggest its tone. Perhaps I'll say that there are some fairly practical suggestions about the way machinery could be fitted to human needs, and I might leave out that bit about frequent recourse to psychiatric repair-men. It's a swell line, but there's nothing in the book to justify it. I might even go so far as to admit that the book is an unpretentious, good-natured attempt to suggest what social intelligence could accomplish with the material that is at hand."

As he paced up and down in his indecision, he snapped on the radio for the late news. That did it. Another one of his predictions had been completely invalidated. He addressed the envelope in a frenzy, and his rush to the mailbox was so headlong that he was nearly shot as a fifth columnist.

Now I don't pretend to know. Maybe it didn't happen this way at all. But that's my story and, awaiting correction, I stick to it.

SELDEN RODMAN: I have differed in the past, and still differ, with some of the premises and some of the conclusions of Max Lerner's liberalism. Marxism, dialectical materialism, the Class War as a means of effecting enlightened social change, have always seemed to me antithetical to liberalism and democracy. And I fear that if liberalism ever does become completely discredited in this country it will be because liberals like Mr. Lerner and ex-liberals like Messrs. Waldo Frank and Lewis Mumford have had this divided allegiance and have led many people to confuse radicalism with dictatorship, democracy with rule-by-labor, and anti-fascism with the doctrine that the ends justify the means.

But in Mr. Frank's latterday assault on liberalism in general and Mr. Lerner in particular, I align myself wholeheartedly with Mr. Lerner. This is no time for hysteria or obscurantism; if clear thinking was ever needed, it is needed today. When Mr. Mumford reviews the career of a literary man by inventing out of whole cloth a deathbed scene in which the literary man dreams hopefully of American intervention in the European war—that is hysteria. When Mr. Frank indulges in such word-mongering as "man's intuitive reception of life's fundamental source," such meaningless platitudes as "only light can dispel darkness," and such petulant intellectual arrogance as "he (Lerner) cannot see the *reality* of my book"—he has given up the writer's first responsibility: to think and write clearly.

The effort to understand and therefore be able to defeat fascism, whether at home or abroad, within or without, is not improved by Wagnerian phraseology like "the Dark Body of Hitlerism." We do not need to renew, as Archibald MacLeish is suggesting, our faith in slogans; what we need is a closer attention to the meaning of words themselves and the real or unreal things to which they refer. Hitler is not, as Mr. Frank has it, the result of the Allied failure to "see reality" by building bigger and better "Stukas;" he is the result of the failure of the post-war democracies (including Germany) to plan either their own political economies or the political economy of the world.

"Dissenting Opinions" is an occasional department conducted by authors and reviewers.

Compleat Collector

By John T. Winterich

M. L. PARRISH of Philadelphia and Dormy House, Pine Valley, N. J. (the New Jersey address is much the more important, because that is where Mr. Parrish keeps his books), believes that civilization reached its apotheosis in the nineteenth century, and he is probably right. Over the years he has surrounded himself with the first editions of eminent and sub-eminent Victorian authors, and he has read them all—read them, too, in first edition, which is rank heresy in the eyes of most collectors. But somebody has to read books in first edition if bibliographies are to be compiled—too much recent bibliographical research has been conducted on the basis that beyond binding, title-page, and imprint, most books consist of blank paper.

Mr. Parrish has assembled and edited two brief bibliographical studies of the writings of Lewis Carroll, a comprehensive summary of "Victorian Lady Novelists" (George Eliot, Mrs. Gaskell, and the Brontë sisters), and a description with notes of the works of Charles Kingsley and Thomas Hughes. He has now followed this with "Wilkie Collins and Charles Reade: First Editions (with a few exceptions) in the Library at Dormy House," compiled with the assistance of Elizabeth V. Miller. The book has been published by Constable & Co. in an edition of 150 copies at ten dollars a copy.

This is no vest-pocket bibliography. It is a handsome quarto of 356 pages with an abundance of gravure illustrations, to say nothing of the text. And to say nothing of the text would be an egregious sin of omission. For the text is the sublimation of Mr. Parrish's devotion to the innerds and outerds of a book—its soul and its body.

> When Mr. Royce, who is the most devoted Balzacian on this continent, has finished that task, he can turn his attention to the compilation of a bibliography of Mr. Wells, who already has an impressive total of titles to his credit.—*The Compleat Collector, S.R.L., February 27, 1932.*

"That task" was William H. Royce's Balzac bibliography, now *fait accompli*. The Mr. Wells mentioned is Gabriel Wells, L.H.D. The bibliography of Mr. Wells adumbrated, or hinted, or suggested, or ordered by this department more than eight years ago is also now *fait accompli*. And Mr. Royce did it. Charles F. Heartman has published it from The Book Farm, Hattiesburg, Mississippi, in an edition of "less than two hundred copies." Purism would prefer "fewer" to "less," but this is not the fault of William H. Royce or Gabriel Wells.

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Glamour Girl of the Nineties

LILLIAN RUSSELL. The Era of Plush. By Parker Morell. New York: Random House. 1940. 319 *pp., with index.* $3.

Reviewed by FAIRFAX DOWNEY

"LADIES and gentlemen! Friends and customers!" proclaimed Tony Pastor from the stage of his music hall one evening in 1880. "Tonight I have a most unusual treat in store for you. At great personal trouble and expense I have brought here for your admiration and entertainment the Beautiful English Ballad Singer. Ladies and gentlemen, I give you a vision of loveliness and a voice of gold—Miss Lillian Russell!"

Thus grandiloquently was introduced to the American stage a corn-fed girl from Iowa, christened Helen Louise Leonard. And thus on page 11, having opened with Tony in the trained seal spot, she is reintroduced by Mr. Morell in a biography which is a companion piece to his "Diamond Jim" Brady, just as Lillian and Jim were pals in life.

Pink and white and gold she was in her blond beauty and, at first, slim. She appealed to every man in the audience as being "just the kind of a girl any fellow would like to marry and teach the facts of life," states the author, and cherished memories of her contemporaries bear him out. And Lillian was more than an eyeful. Her charm floated across the footlights. She could sing anything light opera offered and might have tackled grand, if Nellie Melba had not warned her to keep off that green-eyed grass. She learned to act. Since she played often in road companies and got about considerably otherwise, her clothes were national fashion plates. Mr. Morell does them as much justice as can be expected of a mere man.

Lillian was a legend in her lifetime and she still is, although there is nothing intangible or elusive about her saga. Yet she acquired an aura, a glittering, gold-plated, diamond-studded but still roseate aura. She was, as the jacket blurb says, the original American glamour girl, with considerable more stamina than the modern type. Lillian held 'em on unto the third generation. Starting from scratch, she amassed a fortune on the stage and four husbands, the last being Alexander Moore, Pittsburgh millionaire and Ambassador to Spain. Decidedly she was worth a book, and this one is easy reading.

Some of its most interesting pages deal with Lillian's struggles with the flesh—more specifically, avoirdupois. Steadily she lost the battle and gained

(From the jacket of "Lillian Russell.")
"Lillian was a legend."

the poundage in spite of the advent of the age of bicycling. Her father's pet name for her, "Airy-Fairy Lillian," became a travesty. What could a woman expect who parked her corset during a dinner and matched the glutonous Diamond Jim dish for dish? But like Mae West, she triumphed over embonpoint. As Clarence Day wrote: "There was nothing wraithlike about Lillian Russell; she was a voluptuous beauty, and there was plenty of her to see. We liked that. Our tastes were not thin, or ethereal. We liked flesh in the Nineties. It didn't have to be bare, and it wasn't, but it had to be there."

Lillian came to personify the upholstered elegance of the Age of Plush which Mr. Morell delineates. His treatment of background lacks the late Thomas Beer's rare gift and Frederick Lewis Allen's skill in evocation of the past. At times he seems to stand off, point and exclaim: "Weren't they funny old things in those days!" His style is sometimes brisk, slangy, and wise-cracking. But who shall say that wasn't a good way to write the story?

The publishers have been ungenerous with illustrations to a book about one who "for more than two decades was the most photographed woman in the world," and it is regrettable that the few cuts used have been bunched for economy's sake.

Fairfax Downey is the author of "Portrait of an Era: as Drawn by C. D. Gibson" and "Disaster Fighters."

Girlhood in Baltimore

A QUAKER CHILDHOOD. By Helen Thomas Flexner, New Haven: Yale University Press. 1940. 335 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by ROSEMARY CARR BENÉT

THIS is an autobiography that limits itself to the first years, the early part of life, which always remains most vivid. It is an account of a girlhood in Baltimore in the period from 1871 to 1888. Mrs. Flexner was Helen Thomas, the daughter of Mary Whitall Thomas and Dr. James Carey Thomas, both members of the orthodox branch of the Society of Friends. Her eldest sister was M. Carey Thomas, later the leading light of Bryn Mawr. At this time, her distinguished older sister was flying in the face of public opinion by pursuing a higher education abroad.

The author had six older brothers and sisters who teased and plagued her. She was the youngest daughter, the seventh surviving child, in a family of eight, and a varied and lively family it was . . . not at all a quiet nor a drab household. One of the most interesting things about the recollections is the description of the clash of youthful spirits which made life in the Quaker home anything but dull. There were the inevitable quarrels, the cleavages and loyalties that occur in a big family. The author adored her forceful and capable mother and the tragedy of her death by cancer made a terrific impression on her and ended her girlhood. Carey Thomas had the same devotion, for in one letter she said "Tell Father I want to write to him but my pen always begins Dearest Mother."

The Quaker background is interesting. It is surprisingly full of inconsistencies. The Thomases hid their piano before a visit from Grandmother Whitall who was a strict Quaker. Yet her mother's "greatest self-indulgence" was providing pretty clothes for her children. Helen had a green velvet frock brought from England, and her sister Margaret had "lovely pink and blue bows tied on her dresses" which she greatly coveted. Her brothers, at a tender age, took temperance pledges. On a trip abroad, the author was horrified when her little brother Frank broke his pledge by taking a sip of red wine. Like Elsie Dinsmore, she once told her sister Carey that it was a sin to go to a concert on Sunday, even though this was Leipzig. She even objected to eating food bought on the Sabbath which made difficulties on their abroad.

"A Quaker Childhood" gives a picture of a time and a philosophy, "a belief in the guiding hand of Providence," that have since disappeared.

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The Golden Amber Tradition

BEFORE LUNCH. By Angela Thirkell. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1940. 322 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

"MRS. GRANT, poor woman, must want a lover as much as any one of them. A desperate dull life hers must be with the doctor," the graceless Tom Bertram remarked to his cousin Fanny; and immediately discovered the doctor so close at hand that he was obliged to say, for want of anything better, "A strange business this in America, Dr. Grant! What is your opinion?" The doctor seems to have had no opinion of what was apparently the War of 1812, for that is the year in which "Mansfield Park" was begun; it was completed in 1814, the year between Leipsic and Waterloo. And that question by which Tom Bertram tried to cover up his gaffe is the only allusion to politics that can be found in the novels of Jane Austen, who wrote during the Napoleonic wars and whose brothers were in the navy. One thinks of that in picking up, today, another of Angela Thirkell's charming, amusing novels of the gentry in the Cotswolds, whose plot is furnished by the designedly much ado about nothing when the whole county society is mobilized to prevent the building of a garage in an unspoiled field, an excitement that turns out to have been unnecessary.

As usual, Mrs. Thirkell begins with a new set of actors, and brings in one or two of our old friends like Lord Pomfret. There are young people, and older people, to be safely paired off after misunderstandings, and there are characters who are there only to be affectionately smiled at. Some of these are in their creator's happiest vein, while others, it must be acknowledged, are less happy; once or twice the eccentricities seem forced, and the genial bore comes very close to being a bore and not the caricature of one.

But one turns gladly to saying that Mrs. Thirkell's ear is as sharp as ever for the non-sequiturs of ordinary conversation, and her eye as keen for the illogicalities of English life. She understands the country feudalism which will let a kitchenmaid to be christened Lucasta after Lady Bond, but will never allow her be called anything but "Lou"; but she understands also that Lord Bond can be tyrannized over by his own butler in the matter of the key to the hideous piano that is his pride and joy. Here, pleasant and kindly and rather foolish and happy, it all is; here, at least, it will remain. Not of England will it ever be said "She had no poet, and she died." England has had the world's most eloquent lovers, and each in his way and his degree, Shakespeare and Wodehouse, Trollope, and Angela Thirkell, they preserve a part of her in golden amber.

Portrait by John S. Sargent

Angela Thirkell's eye is keen for the illogicalities of English life.

Apostrophe to Evil

BE THOU THE BRIDE. By Christine Weston. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1940. 415 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by DAVID BOARDMAN

BUCKTHORN, the Maine village which Mrs. Weston has created as the scene of this story, is a smaller place than Mr. Henry Bellamann's midwestern town of King's Row or Mr. William Faulkner's Mississippi, but it must contain as much degeneracy and diabolism as either of them. In the first of the novel's three books, dated 1897, we are introduced to a group of children; there are Fortune and Sam, the children of Homer Whiplow, a powerful man with a persecution complex, who keeps his other, idiot children in cages in the attic; and there are the Whiplows' cousins, the illegitimate Noakes children, Jacob and Hendrika, who are born to trouble and make it. As the years go on, the Noakes and Whiplow families and their neighbors are dragged through such a tangle of interrelated sins and misfortunes that any attempt to indicate them briefly must carry a suggestion of burlesque, though that is the last thing one thinks of while one is under the author's macabre spell.

Drawing by Waldo Pierce

Christine Weston seems interested in goblins.

All of this is presented in a style at once extraordinarily vivid and extraordinarily cold-blooded. One watches these figures go about their detestable affairs as one might watch an enormously magnified view of a female spider eating her mate—with fascination and with loathing, but without moral revulsion, simply because the creatures are so little human. One is puzzled as to the author's attitude toward her monstrous little world. Her title is taken from an apostrophe to Poverty by Robert Bridges; but although, as Mrs. Meynell has told us, "The Lady Poverty was fair, but she has lost her looks of late," still this does not seem to be a study in the ugliness of poverty. It is true that in the course of the book a doctor discourses on the effect of poverty in producing a family of cretins whom we are casually taken to visit, but the Whiplows were comfortably off, for village folk, and they had their idiot children too. Mr. Bellamann's "King's Row" may be a study in the warping effect of a small town; but the evil here reaches out to include the city. Simply, Mrs. Weston seems interested in these goblins, as she never is in Fortune, the kind and human figure in the book, but also the most lifelessly drawn, so that her paralysis seems only an externalization of a weakness in her essence. To Mrs. Weston, it seems, human beings are drab and dreary except when they are splotched with blood. This makes a compelling book, but not one that many readers will find sympathetic.

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Harlem Literati in the Twenties

LANGSTON HUGHES

IN the early days of the New Negro Renaissance, one summer, that of 1926, I lived in a rooming house on 137th Street in Harlem where Wallace Thurman and Harcourt Tynes lived, also. Thurman was then managing editor of *The Messenger,* a Negro magazine that had a curious career. It began by being very radical, very racial, and sort of socialistic just after the war. Later it became a kind of Negro society magazine and a plugger for Negro business with photographs of prominent colored ladies and their nice homes. A. Philip Randolph, now President of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, Chandler Owen, and George S. Schuyler were connected with the magazine. Schuyler's editorials, à la Mencken, were the most interesting things in *The Messenger*—verbal, vigorous brickbats. I asked Thurman what kind of magazine *The Messenger* was, and he said it reflected the policy of whoever paid off best at the time.

Anyway, *The Messenger* bought my first short stories, for which they paid ten dollars each. Wallace Thurman wrote me that they were very bad short stories, but better than any others they could find, so he published them.

Thurman had recently come from California to New York. He was a strangely brilliant black boy who had read everything—and whose critical mind could find something wrong with everything he read. He would like a book and then find a million faults in it. He would get from the library a great pile of volumes, go through them in less than a week, reading eleven lines at a glance, and be able to discuss each one at great length with anybody. That was why, I suppose, he was later given a job as a reader at Macaulay's—the only Negro reader, so far as I know, to be employed by any of the larger publishing firms.

Later Thurman became a ghost writer for *True Story Magazine* and other publications, writing under all sorts of fantastic names like Ethel Belle Mandrake or Patrick Casey. He turned out Irish and Jewish and Catholic "True Confessions." He collaborated with William Jordan Rapp on plays and novels. Later he ghosted books. It has been said that he wrote blond Peggy Hopkins Joyce's "Men, Women, and Checks."

Wallace Thurman wanted to be a great writer, but none of his own work ever made him happy. "The Blacker the Berry," his first book, was an important novel on a subject little dwelt upon in Negro fiction—the plight of the very dark Negro woman who encounters in some communities a double wall of color prejudice, within and without the race. His play, "Harlem," considerably distorted for box office purposes, was, nevertheless, a compelling study—and the only one in the theatre—of the impact of Harlem on a Negro family fresh from the South. And his "Infants of the Spring," was a bitter, but superb, portrayal of the bohemian fringe of Harlem's literary and artistic life.

Yet none of these works pleased Thurman. He wanted to be a writer like Gorki or Thomas Mann, and felt that instead he was merely a journalist. His critical mind, comparing his work with that of Proust, Melville, Tolstoy, Galsworthy, Dostoievski, Henry James, Hemingway, Romain Rolland, found it vastly wanting. So he took to writing a great deal for money, laughing the while bitterly at his fabulously concocted "true stories," creating two bad motion pictures of the "Adults Only" type for Hollywood, drinking more and more gin, and then threatening to jump out of windows at parties and kill himself.

Langston Hughes

During the summer of 1926, Wallace Thurman, Zora Neale Hurston, Aaron Douglas, John P. Davis, Bruce Nugent, Gwendolyn Bennett, and myself decided to publish "a Negro quarterly of the arts" to be called *Fire*—the idea being that it would burn up a lot of the old, dead conventional Negro-white ideas of the past, *épater le bourgeois* into a realization of the existence of the younger Negro writers and artists, and provide us with an outlet for publication not available in the limited pages of the small Negro magazines then existing, *The Crisis, Opportunity,* and *The Messenger*—the first two being house organs of inter-racial organizations, and the latter being God knows What.

WE met on torrid summer evenings to plan *Fire*. Each of us agreed to give fifty dollars to finance the first issue. Thurman was to edit it, John P. Davis to handle the business end, and Bruce Nugent to take charge of distribution. The rest of us were to serve as an editorial board to collect material, contribute our own work, and act in any useful way that we could. October came before we were ready to go to press. I had to return to Lincoln, John Davis to law school at Harvard, and Zora Hurston to her studies at Barnard—whence she went about Harlem with an anthropologist's ruler measuring heads for Franz Boas. Only three of the seven had contributed the stipulated fifty dollars, but the others faithfully promised to send it out of tuition checks, wages, or begging. Thurman went on with the work of preparing the magazine. He got a printer. He planned the layout. It had to be on good paper, he said, worthy of the drawings of Aaron Douglas. It had to have beautiful type, worthy of the first Negro art quarterly. It had to be what we seven young Negroes dreamed our magazine would be—so in the end it cost almost a thousand dollars—and nobody could pay the bills.

I don't know how Thurman persuaded the printer to let us have all

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the copies to distribute, but he did. I think Alain Locke, among others, signed notes guaranteeing payments. But since Thurman was the only one of the seven of us with a regular job, for the next three or four years his checks were constantly being attached and his income seized to pay the printer's bill. And whenever I sold a poem, the money went there, too—to *Fire*.

None of the older Negro intellectuals would have anything to do with *Fire*. Dr. Du Bois in *The Crisis* roasted it. The Negro press called it all sorts of bad names, largely because of a green and purple story by Bruce Nugent in the Oscar Wilde tradition which we had included. Rean Graves, the critic for *The Baltimore Afro-American* began his review by saying, "I have just tossed the first issue of *Fire* into the fire." Commenting upon various of our contributors, he said:

> Aaron Douglas who, in spite of himself and the meaningless grotesqueness of his creations, has gained a reputation as an artist, is permitted to spoil three perfectly good pages and a cover with his pen and ink hudge pudge. Countee Cullen has written a beautiful poem in his "From a Dark Tower," but tries his best to obscure the thought in superfluous sentences. Edward Silvera is guilty of two poems. Langston Hughes, in three poems, displays his usual ability to say nothing in many words, willfully violating all the rules of poetics and still calling his work poetry.

SO *Fire* had plenty of cold water thrown on it by the colored critics. The white critics (except for an excellent editorial in *The Bookman* for November, 1926) scarcely noticed it at all. We had no way of getting it distributed to bookstands or newsstands. Bruce Nugent took it around New York on foot and some of the Greenwich Village bookshops put it on display, and sold it for us. But then, Bruce, who had no job, would collect the money and eat it up before he got back to Harlem.

Finally, irony of ironies, several hundred copies of *Fire* were stored in the basement of an apartment where an actual fire occurred and the bulk of the whole issue was burned up. Even after that Thurman had to go on paying the printer. Now *Fire* is a collector's item, and very difficult to get, being mostly ashes.

That taught me a lesson about little magazines. But since white folks had them, we Negroes thought we could have one, too. But we didn't have the money.

Wallace Thurman laughed a long bitter laugh. He was a strange kind of fellow who liked to drink gin, but *didn't* like to drink gin; who liked being a Negro, but felt it a great handicap, and who adored bohemianism,

Miss Hurston is a perfect book of entertainment in herself.

but thought it was wrong to be a Bohemian. He liked to waste a lot of time, but he always felt guilty wasting time. About the future of Negro literature Thurman was very pessimistic. He thought the Negro vogue had made us all too conscious of ourselves, had flattered us and spoiled us, and had provided too many easy opportunities for some of us to drink gin and more gin on which he thought we would always be drunk from then on. With his bitter sense of humor, he called the Harlem literati, the "niggerati."

Of this "niggerati" Zora Neale Hurston was certainly the most amusing. Only to reach a wider audience, need she ever write books—because she is a perfect book of entertainment in herself. In her youth she was always getting scholarships and things from wealthy white people, some of whom simply paid her just to sit around and represent the Negro race for them, she did it in such a racy fashion. She was full of side-splitting anecdotes, humorous tales, and tragi-comic stories remembered out of her life in the South as a daughter of a travelling minister of God. She could make you laugh one minute and cry the next. To many of her white friends, no doubt, she was a perfect "darkie" in the nice meaning they give the term —that is a naive, childlike, sweet, humorous, and highly-colored Negro.

But Miss Hurston was clever, too —a student who didn't let college give her a broad *a* and who had great scorn for all pretensions, academic or otherwise. That is why she was such a fine folk-lore collector, able to go among the people and never behave as if she had been to school at all. Nobody could stop the average Harlemite on Lenox Avenue and measure his head with a strange looking anthropological device and not get bawled out for the attempt, except Zora—who used to stop anybody in the street whose head looked interesting, and measure it.

When Miss Hurston graduated from Barnard she took an apartment in West 66th Street near the Park in that row of Negro houses there. She moved in with no furniture at all and no money, but in a few days friends had given her everything from decorative silver birds and genuine etchings to a linen cabinet and a footstool. And on Saturday night, to christen the place, she had a *hand*-chicken dinner, since she had forgotten to say she needed forks. She seemed to know almost everybody in New York. She had been a secretary to Fannie Hurst, and had met dozens of celebrities whose friendship she retained. Yet she was always having terrific ups-and-downs about money.

Strange thing about that Negro Renaissance that boomed and bloomed in Harlem. Practically none of the Negroes taking part in it were Harlemites. Jessie Fauset was from Philadelphia, Charles S. Johnson from Virginia, Arna Bontemps from California, Countee Cullen from Kentucky, Aaron Douglas from Kansas, Wallace Thurman from Salt Lake City, Rudolph Fisher from Washington, Walter White from Atlanta, Paul Robeson from New Jersey, Ethel Waters from Philadelphia, Richmond Barthe from New Orleans.

But Harlem was like a great magnet for the Negro intellectual, pulling him from everywhere. Or perhaps the magnet was New York—but once in New York, he had to live in Harlem for rooms were hardly to be found elsewhere unless one could pass for white, or Mexican, or Euraisian, and perhaps live in the Village—which always seemed to me a very arty locale, in spite of the many real artists and writers who lived there. Only a few of the New Negroes lived in the Village, Harlem being their real stamping ground.

The wittiest of these New Negroes, the one whose tongue was flavored with the sharpest and saltiest humor, was Rudolph Fisher whose stories appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly*. His novel, "Walls of Jerico," captures but slightly the raciness of his own conversation. A doctor and X-Ray specialist, who always frightened me a little because he could think of the most excessively clever things to say—and I could never think of anything to answer. He and Alain Locke together were great for intellectual wisecracking. The two would fling big and witty words about with such swift and punning innuendo that an ordinary mortal just sat and looked wary for fear of being caught in a net of clever witticisms.

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The Land That Lingers

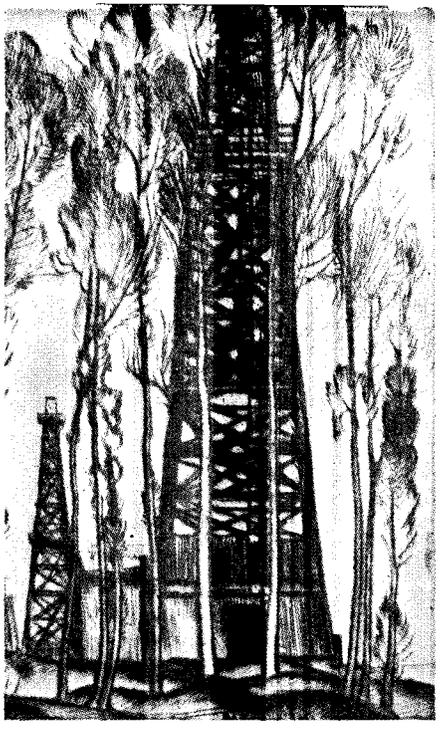
OUR SOUTHWEST. By Erna Fergusson. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1940. 383 *pp., with index.* $3.50.

Reviewed by CHARLES W. FERGUSON

IT is to the credit of this book that in style and manner it has a good deal of the charm and grandeur of the region it presents. Given to spacious generalizations, many of them possibly not sound but all of them picturesque and provocative, it is also bountiful in history and lore and in colloquial incident as well as expression. It is one of the few books I have seen where the illustrations actually supplement and enrich the contents. The photographs of Ruth Frank and others, together with Miss Fergusson's hearty and open manner in showing both the background and salient features of her subject, ought to go far toward explaining to those hapless mortals who do not know the Southwest just why it strikes the newcomer so hard, lingers so long in the memory of those who have known it, and has come in these last days to occupy such a justly conspicuous place in the national attention. For Miss Fergusson's book combines the better features of a travel poster and a study in anthropology; it is at once enthusiastic and detached.

The book opens in Fort Worth, though it unfortunately side-swipes Dallas with certain frightful inaccuracies before it gets going. It was necessary, I suppose to start somewhere, but it is a mistake to be too territorial about the Southwest, saying, It begins here and ends there. For the Southwest is a state of mind as well as a region. Its influence exceeds any boundaries you may set up, and Dallas is not less Southwestern than Fort Worth, the neighboring cow-town, merely because Dallas citizens wear store-bought clothes.

But cities are a convenient and on the whole satisfactory way of highlighting the Southwest, and there can be no objection as Miss Fergusson goes from Fort Worth to San Antonio, thence to El Paso, Tucson, Phoenix, Gallup, Santa Fe, Albuquerque, Taos, and through the high plains of the Texas Panhandle. There are good intermediary passages on the old-time cowboy, the origin and growth of the rodeo and the dude ranch, the artists in Taos, the fiestas, of course, and there is an informing chapter on the late Fred Harvey, that wily Englishman whose "eating houses" at strategic points along the Santa Fe did as much to transform the West as did barb wire. The book is topped off with a kind of glorified bibliography with interpretative comment to enlighten the reader for further study of the subject.



Etching by Roi Partridge ("Fine Prints of the Year" 1932)
Texas Oil Well

By far the most eloquent passages of the book deal with interpretation—with the effect of climate and topography on manners, culture, and character. Here the author is at her best. The prologue—written in answer to the question, What is the Southwest?—is the finest sample of such passages, though comment is generously spaced throughout the book. In a country as broad and diverse as America, our nationalism must necessarily take a local turn. It is impossible to be enthusiastic or sentimental about the Jersey flats and Santa Fe in the same breast. To Miss Fergusson, the Southwest is America, as it is to many another, and by the time one has read her book it seems doubtful whether the rest of the country matters much, if at all, in the development of those qualities we have come to think of as characteristically American.

Charles W. Ferguson is an associate editor of The Reader's Digest.

Something Special in Missouri

AN OZARK ANTHOLOGY. By Vance Randolph. Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, Ltd. 1940. 374 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by CLYDE BRION DAVIS

RECENTLY one of the nation's leading news commentators on the air referred to the Ozark Mountains as being in Kentucky. To one reared in Missouri that wasn't even amusing. It was downright shocking. It was practically blasphemous ignorance—if there is such a thing.

To a Missourian or an Arkansan, the Ozark Mountains are something special. His attitude is not pride, such as a Coloradan's pride in the lofty Rockies nor a Californian's pride of climate nor an Iowan's pride of tall corn. A Missourian or an Arkansan feels rather that the Ozarks are something to be loved and defended.

A native New Yorker or a native Californian might feel there was no particular reason why Vance Randolph's "An Ozark Anthology" should be published at all. They wouldn't question a radio broadcast putting the Ozark Mountains in Kentucky, either. Vance Randolph's introduction alone is sufficient reason for this book. An introduction is supposed to introduce something and these seven pages of gently humorous exposition should have been published even if there had been nothing to introduce but the minutes of the Common Council of Fayetteville, Ark.

What does follow are fifteen essays and short stories by Nancy Clemens, Thomas Hart Benton, Thames Williamson, MacKinlay Kantor, Rose Wilder Lane, Charles Morrow Wilson, George Milburn, Rose O'Neill, Emily Newell Blair, William Cunningham, Robert L. Morris, Charles J. Finger, Charlie May Simon, Wayman Hogue, and Eleanor Risley. Nancy Clemens's "Yes, I'm a Hillbilly" is a delightful piece of candor and wit. I wonder, however, if she isn't stretching it a smidgen to say Ozark accents are Chaucerian? Wouldn't Elizabethan be enough? Thomas Hart Benton's "America's Yesterday," is as colorful and honest and free from phony effects as the artist's paintings. Thames Williamson's "Drum Her Out," isn't as good as one would expect from him. "Paid in Full," by Rose Wilder Lane; "The Witch Doctor of Rosy Ridge," by MacKinlay Kantor, and "Perry," by Charles Morrow Wilson, are competent, better than average magazine fiction about hillbillies. "An Ozark Fantasia," by Charles J. Finger, as an essay is one of those things. It ends,

> There are other worlds than ours where sunshine and rain are nonexistent and no flowers grow, but in which we need not dwell. In this thought there is comfort.
>
> It came upon me to realize that it is good to be alive.

That will give you an idea.

I wish Mr. Randolph had included a little native poetry. Often enough that is bad enough to be good.

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END OF AN ERA

(*Continued from page* 4)

younger writers; and he was forever in search of new types for his work and ready for new points of view. There were various other reasons for his change. One was the rapid growth of his sociological interests. Another was his desire for a simpler life, for Boston had lost the simple intensity that once had been its charm for him and had grown more reactionary also. In all this he showed the influence of Tolstoy, who, as he often said, remade his mind.

FOR Howells was deep in Tolstoy. Eagerly interested in all the new novelists, whom he was introducing to American readers, he was drawn to the author of "Anna Karenina," as formerly Turgeniv had drawn him. In this latter case, it was not merely the artist that drew him. Tolstoy's Christian socialism appealed to him still more and had a profound effect on his life and writings. Howells was prepared for this doctrine. Essentially, it was not new to him: it was a reformulation, startling in its power, of thoughts that were familiar in his childhood. He had always believed in human equality. His father had nourished this faith in him, and he had grown up in an atmosphere that

Emily Dickinson

brought before him every day the ideal of coöperation as a way of living. He believed in the public ends that make men "a family, as private property never does;" and he desired the good society, as what he loved was personal goodness,—he called himself a socialist because he was one. He had found in the Shakers an emblem of the good society, for all their sometimes squalid limitations. Their primitive Christian-socialist brotherhood held his imagination, much as he also rejoiced in the world as it was; and, while he never lost this zest,—this delight in the play of human relations,—his conscience laid the train that Tolstoy fired. He was alarmed by the growing division of classes, the rift between poverty and wealth. The popular ideal had once been political greatness, while the modern Websters and Clays were the millionaires; and the older America, which had seemed to be tending towards equality, was yielding to another social order. Along with the millionaire, the tramp had appeared on the scene, and the streets were full of beggars and hungry workmen, while the papers recounted the scandals and rascalities of business. Meantime, the trial of the Chicago anarchists proved that Americans could be killed for unpopular opinions. Howells brooded over this case. For two months it filled his mind, as the Sacco-Venzetti case, in a later decade, occupied the minds of other writers; and he cared nothing about the risks he ran, defending the anarchists after their unfair trial. His horror and heartsickness, the more he dwelt on this, "indefinitely widened" his horizons; but he felt he could no longer trust his country. Was America a republic still? His optimism had been mistaken. Socialism alone could save the nation. All his major views passed through a sea-change, and even his own success smote his conscience. He felt that writers and artists should ally themselves with the toilers of shop and field. They had no part or lot in the secular world; and they had to confront the "ugly realities" also. The old Howells lived on, the sunny, cheerful, happy man who believed in his country-people as much as ever. But the new Howells continued to live with the old. His social consciousness never deserted him.

This change,—or this resurgence of Howells's original feeling,—was part of a widespread movement of the eighteen-eighties. Projects of reform were in the air, and the Western plan of Henry George arose with the Massachusetts plan that sprang from Edward Bellamy's "Looking Backward." Literary Boston was more and more reactionary. As the town had lost its adventurousness and guarded its spoils,—the spoils of the adventures of its forbears,—it returned to the Federalist views of the faraway past; and Aldrich followed Lowell in this direction. Aldrich was hostile to every movement of social reform. His mind reverted to the French Revolution, and he saw the struggling workers as the "lazy *canaille.*" All this contributed to Howells's alienation from Boston, though even there the radical movements throve. Boston was the scene of "Looking Backward," and Tolstoy made a deep impression there. A Tolstoy Club was organized, largely by Edward Everett Hale, whose "Lend-a-Hand" clubs were spreading through the country. Hale lent a hand to every effort to christianize civilization, and he had a memorable talk with Howells on Tolstoy; and Thomas Wentworth Higginson, who was called a socialist, said the name was "a feeler in the right direction." Howells wrote a preface for Bellamy's "The Blindman's World," and he and this country editor had much in common; for, while Bellamy was a villager,—he lived at Chicopee Falls,—he had seen enough of the world to horrify him. He had spent a year as a student in Germany, and the slums and hovels of Europe haunted his mind. He had never known that such misery existed, though he found it, on his return, in New York and Boston. He was convinced that America was going the way of the old world and losing its democratic hope and basis. With a deep distrust of city-life, he saw the villages drifting towards it. He saw the future steadily growing darker. Within a few years, he had written "Looking Backward," with his plan for a better system of human relations. A new political party sprang from his teachings.

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Rediscovering the Arctic

MODERN ARCTIC EXPLORATION. By Gunnar Seidenfaden. Boston: Hale, Cushman & Flint. 1940. 189 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by MARIE AHNIGHITO PEARY

SEVERAL excellent handbooks on Arctic exploration were compiled in the old days, notably one by the Royal Geographical Society. In these books were contained all the gleanings from diaries and published narratives of explorers who had already ventured into the North. In this way, men about to go into the field were able to profit by the failures and successes of their predecessors. But that was many years ago and the books are valuable today only as curiosities; relics of a past era.

"Modern Arctic Exploration" fills a gap and while it is doubtful if the book will be much read by the general public it should be of immense interest to even the amateur explorer. Carefully and comprehensively the author goes into all the details of present day technique in exploration. Nor does he forget to give credit to the pioneers in the field for the lessons they have handed on, as well as the objectives which they attained. Within the memory of people now living, everything concerning Arctic exploration has undergone a radical change. Through the first decade of the twentieth century, expeditions into the North were for discovery rather than for exploration. But as the unknown lands gave way to well mapped coast lines, when the North Pole which had lured men north for centuries, had been discovered, the center of interest changed. Today men are rediscovering the Arctic in the sense that they are now studying the lands already added to the map, as well as the peoples, the animals, and the country itself in all its scientific aspects.

Mr. Seidenfaden's book is admirably planned. Beginning with a recapitulation of Arctic history, the author then takes up in general the modern aids which have simplified scientific work to a certain extent, although by widening its range they have made preparations for an expedition more complicated and more arduous than before. Chief among these aids to present-day science, are, of course, the aeroplane and the radio, and here, for the only time, it is necessary to take exception to a statement of the author's. He speaks of radio as a great help to the leader of an expedition, enabling him to have a number of different parties in the field at the same time, and yet have each party reporting to headquarters daily for instructions. This is undoubtedly true and has increased the efficiency of scientific expeditions almost tenfold. But Mr. Seidenfaden also says that radio is a tremendous help in maintaining the morale of the members of a party and this, so far as can be learned from leaders of recent radio equipped expeditions, is most decidedly not so. News from home, the voices of loved ones, are upsetting and apt to bring on attacks of homesickness even when things are going smoothly, and when the news from home is bad, the discouragement and general let down are more difficult to combat than no possibility of news at all. This is the only drawback to unlimited radio service for explorers.

There are chapters on map making, geology, biology, marine research—all dealing not only with the kind of equipment used but the methods of employing it in the field. These chapters are invaluable. There is also an understanding and sympathetic account of the Eskimos and the way in which civilization is affecting them. The book ends with a clear and concise history of polar voyages of recent times. The author has not only read widely but has himself had experience in the field and his generous attitude to other explorers, his clear, frank method of handling his subject matter, and above all, his enthusiasm for the work that has been done and that which still remains to be carried out make "Modern Arctic Exploration" readable and informative as well as an excellent reference book. There is a preface by Peter Freuchen.

Marie Ahnighito Peary, daughter of the discoverer of the North Pole and the first white child to be born in the Arctic, has followed the literature of Polar exploration with care.

Your Literary I. Q.

By Howard Collins

10 SHORT STORY OPENINGS

Here are the opening lines of ten well-known short stories. How many of them do you recognize? Allow 5 points for each story you can name, and another 5 for the name of the author. A score of 70 is par, 80 is good, 90 or better is excellent. Answers on page 21.

1. One dollar and eighty-seven cents. That was all. And sixty cents of it was in pennies. . . .

2. *Why, thank you so much. I'd adore to.*
I don't want to dance with him. I don't want to dance with anybody. And even if I did, it wouldn't be him. . . .

3. During the whole of a dull, dark, and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country. . . .

4. It was late in November, 1456. The snow fell over Paris with vigorous, relentless persistency. . . .

5. The door of Henry's lunchroom opened and two men came in. They sat down at the counter. "What's yours?" George asked them. . . .

6. A man stood on a railroad bridge in northern Alabama, looking down into the swift water twenty feet below. The man's hands were behind his back, the wrists bound with a cord. A rope closely encircled his neck. . . .

7. It was a dark autumn night. The old banker was pacing from corner to corner of his study, recalling to mind the party he gave in the autumn fifteen years before. . . .

8. Marley was dead, to begin with. There is no doubt whatever about that. . . .

9. I was very late for school that morning, and I was terribly afraid of being scolded, especially as Monsieur Hamel had told us that he should examine us on participles, and I did not know the first thing about them. . . .

10. Let it be clearly understood that the Russian is a very delightful person till he tucks his shirt in. . . .

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Figures IN A Landscape

by

PAUL HORGAN

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I Shall Always Remember . . .

TEN YEARS IN THE CONGO. By W. E. Davis. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, Inc. 1940. 301 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by LINTON WELLS

"IT was very largely by accident" that W. E. Davis, of Walla Walla, Washington, became a doctor, and "a series of entirely fortuitous events" led him to medical missionary work in the Belgian Congo from 1927 to 1937. One event was that he married a lady who was engaged in spiritual missionary efforts in the Congo, which is some 900,000 miles of jungle, swamp, bushland, and mountains spread over the west central part of Africa above and below the equator. This area, comparable in size to our fifteen Southern states, is populated by some 10,000,000 blacks and 23,000 whites, mostly Belgians.

For ten years, Dr. Davis was the unopposed medical practitioner in the Coquilhatville Province of the Belgian Congo, which is about the size of Connecticut. During this time, he made periodic tours of inspection, traveling afoot, by river steamer, dugout, and bicycle, through torrential rains and torrid heat, combatting swamps, insects, reptiles, and wild animals. He treated hundreds of thousands of patients for a multitude of tropical ailments, performed thousands of major operations with old and rusty instruments which "woggled at the joints," and otherwise fought a praiseworthy, but fairly thankless war of mercy among barbarous peoples who are notorious for their capacity to try the patience of Job.

"Ten Years in the Congo" is Dr. Davis's account of that decade of campaigning against pain, disease, and death, supplemented by Davisian observations regarding the life and customs of the Congo natives; the activities of planters, traders, agents, administrators, and fellow missionaries.

With the wealth of material at Dr. Davis's command, it's too bad that "Ten Years in the Congo" is not a more interesting yarn. It is one of those I-shall-always-remember efforts, abounding with superlatives, I-suppose-thats, and I-wonder-ifs. Moreover, it is repetitious, and the author's involved sentences, plus the publishers' failure to include a map, make reading difficult. Add to all that a disconcerting variation in style and Dr. Davis's persistent use of initials to conceal the identity of the whites who flit in and out of his chronicle, and the patience of the reader is sorely tried.

I have met a considerable number of medical missionaries in thirty years of wandering around the world, including a recent visit to the Congo Belge. I have the utmost respect for them and for their splendid, self-sacrificing efforts. But I can't recall having met a medical missionary quite like Dr. Davis's picture of himself. He confesses that he was finicky about the odors, filth, squalor, and native foods; that he frequently made a hard life more difficult by "sheer pigheadedness"; that he would not take advantage of the comforts of palanquin travel, because he thought it "too effeminate a form of travel for a self-respecting man"; that he occasionally imperiled the welfare of his own family by his self-imposed devotion to medical duty in behalf of natives; and that he grew too lazy to take advantage of the manifold opportunities for scientific research.

Had "Ten Years in the Congo" contained better descriptive writing, it would have been a more entertaining book, and perhaps the reader would better understand Dr. Davis's yearnings to return to his beloved Congo and Congolese.

Linton Wells, reporter, writer, explorer, is the author of "Blood on the Moon" and "Jumping Meridians."

Christopher Morley says: **"Dark Memory should do to the stag line what Rebecca did to a million ladies."**

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DOUBLEDAY, DORAN

DARK MEMORY

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A Solution Wanting

YOUTH—MILLIONS TOO MANY? By Bruce L. Melvin. New York: Association Press. 1940. 220 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by ELI GINZBERG

OURS has been called the century of the child yet the sufferings of children have never been more intense. Striking improvements in pediatrics, education, and penology have been badly dwarfed by the ravages of depressions and wars. Nor have hunger, illness, even death been the ultimate in the tribulations of the young. Life without purpose has proved even more horrible than life without food.

Only the woefully ignorant can fail to realize that the present holocaust is in no small measure the result of Hitler's success in disciplining the bodies and directing the souls of German youth—youth whom the Weimar Republic offered neglect rather than freedom, doles rather than jobs.

In her foreword to Bruce Melvin's "Youth—Millions Too Many?" Mrs. Roosevelt warns that "a country in which there is no place for youth has signed its death warrant," and the chapters that follow prove conclusively that this warning cannot be too strongly impressed upon contemporary America.

The bare facts are appalling: millions of unneeded farm youth; more millions of unwanted city youth; still more millions of youth for whom the need is neither strong nor steady. During the past decade the problem has been attacked: CCC, NYA, WPA tell part of the tale; Y.M.C.A., Cellar Clubs, American Youth Congress tell more. But when all is pieced together the story remains hopelessly inadequate.

The failure to distinguish past from present; the failure to assume responsibility; the failure to trust their own strength have forced the democracies to fight for their lives. This incompetence in matters international had its counterpart in matters national. To educate the young for positions that did not exist; to place premiums on idleness; to expand recreational rather than working opportunities is a record sad but true.

To explain these errors is easier than to eradicate them. But if hope there be, it lies in enlarging our knowledge of basic facts and in increasing our sacrifices for basic values.

Eli Ginzberg is the author of "The Illusion of Economic Stability" and "The House of Adam Smith."

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THE NEW BOOKS

Fiction

TAMARACK. By Edith Roberts. Bobbs-Merrill. 1940. 368 *pp.* $2.50.

Legend has it that Potemkin, minister to Catherine of Russia, created neat and perfect villages in advance of her infrequent trips through the provinces, so that she might see nothing about her but gay and dancing peasants, hear only laughter and balalaikas. Something of this sort is done every summer for his majesty, the American Vacationer. He moves out of his city canyons into what he fondly imagines to be the free-spirited and open-hearted country spaces, into towns that have subsisted grimly upon his imagination. Even grimmer is Miss Roberts's stripping of the pretense. "Tamarack" is a town, any town, in the North Woods—with its old families, its other-side-of-the-track, its one dance hall, its summer aristocrats, its winter poverty, its cruelty and grief and straggling humanity. Miss Roberts spares nothing; this is as bitter an arraignment of the American town as we have ever seen. Perhaps too bitter. "Main Street," as we remember it, had much humor and more humanity. Tamarack is peopled with desperate and humorless folk, harried and harrying. There are some good people in it but no happy ones, which is not credible. Miss Roberts writes expertly, with a controlled intensity that rams every detail home where it will count for the most. The sum total of her intensity here is a vigorous corrective to the old dream of happy Middletown; but probably the truth lies somewhere between.

N. L. R.

DOC'S WIFE. By Faye Cashatt Lewis. Macmillan. 1940. 198 *pp.* $2.

This is a straightforward, undramatized telling of what it means to be the wife of a struggling young doctor practising in a small town in the heart of Iowa. It is as matter-of-fact as a line-a-day book, as richly American as pumpkin pie, as homely as a baked potato. It is the voice of the forgotten woman of literature, the woman who marries, bears her children and brings them up sensibly, manages her household on a fluctuating budget yet pays all her bills as she goes, relines her husband's overcoat and addresses her club on Scandinavian literature with equal verve—and likes every bit of it. Notwithstanding the evidence of confession magazines and soap operas there are thousands like her in the Middle West, and they perhaps with their thoroughly nice, hard-working husbands, will save democracy if the job can be done.

Fay Lewis had a possible advantage over her sisters in that she was herself a newly-graduated M.D. when she married "P.B." and went with him to Ridgefield, Iowa, where as a fledgling doctor he hoped to establish a practice. They stayed five years in Ridgefield happily accumulating patients, friends, and a family of youngsters. Then seeking broader pastures they moved to Hamilton Center where presumably they still are. If the renouncement of a medical career of her own cost her a struggle she makes no sign. She makes no attempt to dramatize her life or the community. She sees herself as important, but merely as she contributes to the central figure, a young doctor struggling in a rural community with none of the assistance or equipment he had learned in school and hospital to depend on. But in spite of herself she emerges from her pages as much the most interesting phenomenon in the book. Because she has none of the novelist's flair for dramatic emphasis either of character or of event, you may be a little bored at times. But the chances are that it will hold you by its forthright human quality and unconscious revelation of a thoroughly likable woman in whom intelligence, humor, and honesty combine with tonic effect.

M. S. U.

Government

CLASS AND AMERICAN SOCIOLOGY: FROM WARD TO ROSS. By Charles Hunt Page. Dial Press. 1940. 319 *pp., with index.* $3.50.

Mr. Page has done an excellent job in placing side by side the views on social class of the "fathers" of American sociology, *i.e.,* Ward, Sumner, Small, Giddings, Cooley, and Ross. Page stays in the background and lets our patriarchs speak for themselves. His synopses are as clear as may be in view of the often-muddied thought of the originals; his notes, bibliography, and index are a model of scholarship. The clarifying influence of the guidance of R. M. MacIver is apparent.

It seems that thought on class has revolved largely around the Marxian dichotomy with most of the writers taking a position antagonistic to his. Sumner alone concludes that the "maintenance mores are basic" but comes nevertheless to a practical position in opposition to that of Marx. Small seemed to disapprove of class whether or not it was a fact; Giddings thought the natural hierachy of ability critical for social differentiation; Ross admits social classes but thought he saw their end in an "open class" system which permitted general vertical mobility. On this theme, as on others, Ross socks hard. Cooley seemed to have the clearest concep-

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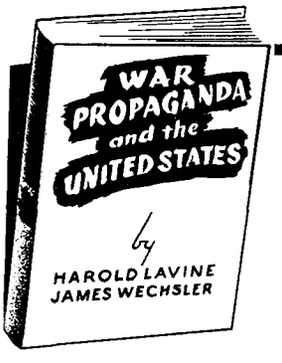

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tion of social class as opposed to economic class but made the error of supposing that "social classes . . . have not separate cultures." Actually, the opposite statement is more defensible than his.

All of these old-timers defend and attempt to aggrandize the middle class (by our count they were all born or mobile into it); all, except Sumner, seem to be annoyed by class and to wish there weren't any; all, with the same exception, hope that class interests will be superseded by uncomplicated devotion to a community ideal. None was a dirt researcher on actual social groups in a real community. It could have been hoped that their work would turn out to be a real stimulus to the empirical study of the modern community from a class standpoint; also, it seems not to have. This stimulus has come from Durkheim, A. Radcliffe-Brown, and their American student, W. L. Warner.

J. D.

Miscellaneous

THE NEW ARCHITECTURE. By Albert Roth. Zurich, Girsberger; New York: Wittenborn & Co. 1940. $7.50.

This is primarily a picture book for architects. Twenty buildings and building groups have been selected by the author from contemporary architecture in Europe and the United States. There are plans, sections, air views, elevations, and construction details for each building. The text is factual and well integrated with the illustrations, which are excellent and copious.

In the introduction the author confesses to a leaning toward the Bauhaus School, but no such confession was needed. The buildings selected fall directly into the category of flat roof, white walls, horizontality, large glass areas, *i.e.*, the vernacular of the Corbusier-Gropius group of contemporary stylists. Of particular interest to American architects would be the illustrations of the Coöperative Farm Community built by the Farm Security Administration at Chandler, Arizona, DeMars and Cairns, architects. This beautiful project has not been adequately treated in any publication before this. It is too bad that more of the F. S. A. Migrant Camps were not included, as they stack up well against modern European architecture. Other American work included consists in one of Richard Neutra's experimental schools in Los Angeles and A. Lawrence Kocher's week-end house on Long Island. Alvar Aalto's beautiful library at lamented Vipuri, Finland, and some new Zurich buildings are of exceptional interest. Within the narrow limits of style, imposed upon himself by the author, the book could be stimulating to the designer.

C. F.

Travel

ISLANDS OF ADVENTURE. By Karl Baarslag. Farrar & Rinehart. 1940. 338 *pp., with index.* $3.

Karl Baarslag has been conscientious enough in this book, but he is uninspired both as traveler and student. Though his story is in part one of first-person adventure one can learn little of him or of his companions other than that he has been a ship's radio operator on a yacht which pretty well covered the warmer seas. Islands may have fascinated him, but his personal experiences on the Marquesas, Mangareva, Tierra del Fuego, the West Indian islets, amount to little more than swims in the bay and tourist jaunts, and his history of Easter Island, Cocos, Juan Fernandez, has been told times without number; West Indian history in particular is adequately presented half a dozen times each year. Mr. Baarslag is accurate enough, but there is certainly no need to repeat the story of Selkirk's isolation or of the wretched Galapagos colonists unless he can append to it material which is not commonly known.

There are hundred's of islands referred to here, and it would be unjust to imply that among them the author has found nothing of interest. He met Percy Cavill, the hermit of the Bahamas, who first developed the swimming crawl, and in Tierra del Fuego he talked with the old hunter who hid the German *Dresden* from the British during the last World War. In Mangareva of the South Seas he found a cathedral that was built to hold 2,000 people, and heard the story of the fanatic priest who single-handed destroyed the culture of the island and hundreds of its natives in the name of his exigent god. And the stories he tells of lost islands, treasure islands, islands which have been appearing and disappearing for centuries, make tolerable reading, too. But Mr. Baarslag's impressions of men and places are rarely memorable, and his writing is careless indeed.

H. D.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 325)

A. NOYES

LITTLE BROTHER HERON

The carp may live for a hundred years
And the trout no more than five;
. . . . . .
The carp grows fat with the tench and the bream,
And he sleeps in the mud as a rule;
But the lithe trout feeds where the quickening stream
Ripples into the pool.

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The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
DEATH RATTLE *Alfred Betts Caldwell* (Crime Club: $2.)	Freddie Philpotts, Penna. State police, F.B.I., and other agencies solve three murders in much harassed Chadds Ford household.	First unfortunate scared to death, second bashed, third shot. Beautiful blonde "spy" also active. Only kitchen sink is omitted.	Yow!
A COMEDY OF TERRORS *Michael Innes* (Dodd, Mead: $2.)	Houseful of pistol-toting Britishers all suspected by detective Allenby of nearly-fatal fogging of banker brother.	Shuttlecock of suspicion kept constantly in air by battledore of brilliant badinage. Sam Coleridge finally shows learned sleuth way out.	*Tour de force*
MURDER IN THE BLACKOUT *J. Russell Warren* (Sheridan House: $2.)	Poisoning of English girl in air-raid rehearsal points to ex-employer. Professional and amateur detectives clash in solving odd case.	Sightless sleuth Jervois senses clues that physical eyes of Insp. Aloysius McGuire can't see, and does it mighty well.	High grade
MR. WESTERBY MISSING *Miles Burton* (Crime Club: $2.)	Wealthy English ornithologist disappears and turns up strangled in sculptor's packing case. Insp. Arnold and Desmond Merrion locate slick slayer.	Complicated mechanism used by Merrion to establish criminal's guilt may seem inconclusive to some addicts. Otherwise an outstanding British baffler.	Good

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Records in Review

EDWARD TATNALL CANBY

"I SHOULD like to say a little about the symphony, but I should never finish talking about the buds, the scent of violets, the fresh green leaves, and the birds in the air, all of which one sees living and stirring through it, in youthful strength,"* wrote Clara Schumann to her young husband about the "Spring" symphony, his first. Nothing need be added, concerning Koussevitsky's new recording of it *(V M-655; $8)* except that the work is characteristically prolix, but quite harmlessly so, for who minds prolixity when youthfulness and the joys of the spring are at stake? Performance and recording are remarkable.

★ ★

Toscanini is at his greatest in the Beethoven overtures, even the lesser ones. The single disc on which he has recorded the Leonore No. 1 with the B.B.C. Orchestra *(V 15945; $2)* is a prize example of the best of Toscanini, and it has the advantages of European recording. It may be placed beside the beautifully recorded No. 2 of Weingartner *(C X-96)* and No. 3 by Walter *(V M-359)*. A peculiarly pleasant variety of Lisztian fireworks is displayed in the Unfamiliar Spanish Rhapsody, played by that genius of pianistic effortlessness, Egon Petri, with the Minneapolis Orchestra. *(C X-163; $4.50.)* Somehow the Spanish sun has softened the portentous pomposity, the veritable floods of virtuosity that mark so much Liszt; we hear primarily the lazy rhythms of two traditional dances, the Jota Aragonesa and the Folia.

★ ★

Schubert is one of the great composers whose lesser works are nowadays being "discovered" by audiences and record companies. The early quartet in Bb, No. 8, recorded by the Busch Quartet is a good example—*(V M-670; $6.50)*. It has some of the qualities of the Schumann symphony—youthfulness, romanticism. It is interesting to find that the last movement is built on a theme later used for the Scherzo of the "great C major" symphony. Columbia's fine Stravinsky library is continued with a spicy sandwich, half S. and half Tchaikowsky. The Baiser de la Fée ballet music *(C 69840-D; $1.50)* is based on themes by the earlier Russian master, yet is full of characteristic Stravinskian quirks. . . . Another novelty is an 18th c. (period of Haydn) Concerto for Organ and Harpsichord by the Spanish monk Soler *(C P-69842-D $1.50)*. A weird piece this—the two chief instruments of the Baroque period combined in music of a sort we associate with piano and orchestra. Yet one is immediately aware of the fitness of this instrumental combination, for these two keyboard instruments are in fact closely related.

★ ★

Space did not permit mention in our last column of Musicraft's fine Buxtehude album, played by Carl Weinrich on the "Praetorius" organ, with excellent notes by Hermann Adler *(Mus. 40; $6.50)*. Were it not for Bach, Buxtehude would be known as a great composer; this album should be an eye-opener to those who know only Bach and Handel before Mozart. Evidently Buxtehude's music is more suited to "Praetorius's" organ than Bach's, for I find this album more satisfactory as to reproduction than the Weinrich Bach albums, recorded at the same time. Highly recommended. Bach himself is represented this month by an unusual item, the Wedding Cantata, for soprano, sung simply and excellently by Elizabeth Schumann, with strings, Mitchell Miller's oboe and Yella Pessl's harpsichord *(V M-664; $5)*. A deeply thoughtful slow introduction is followed by a series of arias in which the dance rhythms of gigue, gavotte, and the like furnish simple tone scenery . . . Victor is issuing a new series of Black-label classics at reduced prices. Some are new releases, others simply re-issues of oldish sets. A sample, Schubert's Unfinished Symphony (Walter; Vienna Philh.) is in the first category. I find it definitely preferable to the more expensive Koussevitsky version, and a fine bargain.

*CLARA SCHUMANN, A Romantic Biography by John N. Burk. Random House. 1940.

ANSWERS TO QUIZ

(*Questions on page* 17)

1. *The Gift of the Magi,* by O. Henry.
2. *The Waltz,* by Dorothy Parker.
3. *The Fall of the House of Usher,* by Edgar Allan Poe.
4. *A Lodging for the Night,* by Stevenson.
5. *The Killers,* by Ernest Hemingway.
6. *Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge,* by Ambrose Bierce.
7. *The Bet,* by Chekhov.
8. *A Christmas Carol,* by Dickens.
9. *The Last Class,* by Alphonse Daudet.
10. *The Man Who Was,* by Kipling.

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This section is on page 22.

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By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

1-I	2-U	3-H	■	4-C	5-H	6-K	7-T	8-P	■	9-B	10-O	11-S	12-K	13-N	■	14-A
15-J	■	16-P	■	17-Q	18-D	19-V	20-J	■	21-L	22-C	23-J	24-T	25-K	26-I	■	27-R
28-B	29-I	30-Q	31-F	32-W	33-H	■	34-D	35-A	36-K	■	37-G	38-L	39-M	40-X	41-S	■
42-O	43-H	■	44-L	45-X	46-J	47-B	■	48-A	49-G	50-I	■	51-H	52-F	53-J	54-U	55-M
56-S	■	57-W	58-K	59-V	■	60-L	61-R	62-W	63-B	64-A	65-U	■	66-B	67-T	68-N	69-K
■	70-P	71-F	■	72-J	73-W	74-T	■	75-F	76-V	77-E	■	78-H	79-J	80-W	■	81-A
82-P	83-K	84-S	85-J	■	86-E	87-J	88-Q	■	89-R	90-M	91-X	■	92-W	93-G	■	94-M
95-T	96-E	97-Q	■	98-E	■	99-F	100-U	101-N	102-M	103-K	104-O	105-I	106-R	107-V	■	108-L
109-M	110-O	111-A	■	112-A	113-H	114-M	■	115-M	116-R	117-D	118-N	■	119-G	120-D	■	121-V
122-E	123-P	■	124-A	125-R	126-G	127-Q	■	128-C	129-F	130-N	131-H	132-S	133-K	■	134-G	135-H
136-D	■	137-U	138-J	139-Q	140-C	141-S	142-L	143-I	■	144-I	145-S	146-M	■	147-X	148-I	149-R
150-F	151-V	152-H	153-L	■	154-E	155-P	■	156-L	157-O	158-X	159-N	160-A	■	161-E	162-H	163-C
■	164-N	165-U	166-O	167-W	168-L	169-V	170-M	■	171-Q	172-L	173-E	174-D	■	175-W	176-V	177-N

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-four words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (1938 edition).

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 20 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Something that incites.

B. Swiss mountaineer song.

C. Benumbs the mind.

D. Children of Uranus and Gaea.

E. Land of which Sukhum is capital.

F. Famous Hungarian conductor (1855-1922).

G. Rough with bristles.

H. Not considered or imagined (comp.)

I. Exclamation of surprise, or thanks (archaic).

J. Annoyance, anxiety.

K. Defamatory.

L. Without help or aid.

M. With contemptuous ridicule.

N. Always.

O. Plant of the genus Urtica.

P. European forage clover.

Q. Agitation.

R. Malady.

S. Adherent of literal facts.

T. Novel by Rousseau.

U. Exclamatory phrase for hailing one (2 wds.)

V. German-American physicist (1879——).

W. Stupid fellow (colloq.)

X. Utmost extent (sb.)

WORDS

	124	35	111	48	81	112	14	64	160	
	47	28	66	63	9					
	4	163	22	140	128					
	174	18	34	117	120	136				
	98	161	96	122	77	173	154	86		
	71	31	150	52	75	99	129			
	49	134	126	93	119	37				
	3	152	78	113	131	162	33	5	135	43	51
	143	29	148	105	50	26	144	1		
	79	46	87	138	53	85	23	20	15	72
	6	133	69	36	58	103	83	12	25	
	172	142	156	21	44	168	60	108	38	153
	170	114	109	102	115	90	39	55	94	146
	68	159	177	101	164	130	118	13		
	166	10	42	104	157	110				
	16	8	155	70	82	123				
	17	88	139	171	97	30	127			
	106	61	89	27	125	149	116			
	145	84	11	41	141	56	132			
	74	24	95	7	67					
	137	54	165	65	100	2				
	76	151	19	107	121	59	176	169		
	62	92	32	167	73	80	57	175		
	45	40	147	158	91					

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TRADE WINDS

P. E. G. QUERCUS

THIS week—the anniversary of a battle at Waterloo—Old Q. doesn't feel much like talking abouts books. He has been keeping grimly inside his own particular concentration camp. ☞When asked about politics, he replies that his choice is Willkie for Vice-President; while they are figuring out what that implies, he escapes. ☞It would be however, a pretty sound idea. ☞When Old Q. gets blue about what America means, he refreshes himself with one of the finest photos ever printed in *Life* a year or so ago. It showed Marian Anderson, the Negro singer, at the microphones in front of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington; and the seated figure of Old Abe showing faintly in the background.

★ ★

☞The press has not always been very helpful in this war. It has been brisk in emphasizing the errors of statesmen; it can do no harm to remind itself occasionally of some of its own. ☞On September 25, 1939, *Life* said: "Germany has mostly light tanks. France and Britain, with more big tanks, have clear superiority over Germany." ☞On February 17, 1940, the N. Y. *Times* reported Philadelphia's exultation at getting the G.O.P. convention. The headlines said: "Philadelphia expects 100,000 visitors; estimates they will spend $12,000,000." ☞On March 31, 1940, Captain Liddell Hart said in the N. Y. *Times:* "The issue of this war is more likely to depend on a psychological than on a military initiative." ☞On May 3, 1940, a Dutch correspondent in the London *Spectator* said "Holland has not allowed herself to be frightened. The natural defences of the country have been exploited to such purpose that invasion is made extremely difficult." ☞On May 6, 1940, the London *Times* said in an editorial "The Germans will presumably now try to overrun Northern Norway." ☞On May 17, 1940, the Manchester *Guardian* said: "Military men look for Marshal Gamelin's counter-stroke with confident expectation." ☞On May 18, 1940, London *Cavalcade* ("The Journal That Keeps Thinking People Well Informed") said "The Man of the Hour Is Generalissimo Gamelin. A philosopher of war with an ice-cold brain . . . he has the measure of the house-painter-turned-Napoleon."

★ ★

☞It is painful to quote these things, but it may be useful to do so in a week when American journalism is assuring us it is turning over a new leaf. ☞In some diligent reading of a batch of foreign weeklies, the best line we encountered was à propos Italy's entry into War: "Mussolini clad in shining blackmail." *(New Statesman & Nation.)* ☞Two days before the Nazis entered Paris we were talking with a broker about stock exchange trends; we said we anticipated a severe fiscal prostration about the time Hitler made his formal entry; the man of Wall Street made an enigmatic comment: "The fall of Paris is already discounted marketwise."

★ ★

☞The upshot of all this is, watch yourself. Truth is already on wartime rations; watch what you read, and listen to what you hear. ☞A world in which babies have to be carried from one country to another in a gas-proof box, and church bells reserved for air-raid alarms, is not a world to take at face value. ☞Rosamond Lehmann, whose *Dusty Answer* is well remembered, wrote in the London *Spectator:* "I wonder for how many years we are doomed to a spate of bright frivolous novels designed to 'lighten the black-out.' My feeling about war-time reading is that scarcely anything is bearable except the best works of the greatest writers of fiction." ☞Russell Doubleday in his excellent little book *Tree Neighbors* (which illustrates and describes 32 kinds of trees frequent in the East) pays tribute to a famous oak tree on Long Island. If it is Quercus Giganticus, the one to which we have alluded before, Mr. Doubleday even underestimates its dimensions. One of our clients took the trouble this spring to measure the oak which Old Q. adopted years ago as his special namesake. At the base its circumference is 24 feet 4 inches; diameter 8 feet. Limb spread 136 feet; estimated height 90 feet. According to Walt Whitman's old paper, *The Long-Islander,* this tree still holds the title we bestowed upon it as Largest Vegetable in the East.

★ ★

☞Another check-up: a novelist was reproached for having made one of his characters, in the years 1911 and following, a devotee of a certain brand of Scotch whisky—which he identified by the nickname "the Pope's telephone number" (Vat 69). The objection was made that said brand was not introduced in the U. S. until after 1918. ☞Old Q. himself looked the matter up, and is assured by the distillers (Messrs. Sanderson, of Leith, Scotland) that Vat 69 has been available in this country since 1903. ☞We haven't heard anything lately about our old favorite, the Belgain artist, Felicien Rops, so we are pleased to note in a catalogue from Argosy, 114 East 59, two rare and costly volumes containing many reproductions of his etchings.

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